DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 461 034 CE 082 791

AUTHOR	Masiarchin, Paul, Ed.; O'Sullivan, Kate, Ed.
TITLE	PEPNet 2002 Effective Practices Criteria Workbook: Building Quality Programs for America's Youth.
INSTITUTION	National Youth Employment Coalition, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Employment and Training Administration (DOL), Washington, DC.; Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, MI.; Ford Foundation, New York, NY.; Pinkerton Foundation, New York, NY.
PUB DATE	2001-11-00
NOTE	66p.; For the 2000 edition, see ED 451 341.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Youth Employment Coalition, 1836 Jefferson Place, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Tel: 202-659-1064; Fax: 202-659-0399; Web site: http://www.nyec.org/pepnet/index.html. For full text: http://www.nyec.org/pepnet/assess.html.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Objectives; Educational Practices; *Employment Programs; *Evaluation Criteria; Labor Force Development; Learning Activities; Program Administration; *Program Development; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Questionnaires; Recognition (Achievement); Records (Forms); Self Evaluation (Groups); Success; Workbooks; *Youth Employment; *Youth Programs

ABSTRACT

This document is a workbook that describes how youth practitioners, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) entities, policymakers, funders, and others can use the Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) to improve the field of youth employment and youth development. The workbook begins with an introduction to PEPNet, which is a framework for program improvement and a resource that identifies practices for effective youth programs and organizes them into five broad categories. The following are among the items included in the workbook's five sections: (1) ways practitioners, WIA entities, policymakers, funders, and others can use PEPNet; (2) the PEPNet improvement process for programs (the benefits of participation and an improvement process flowchart); (3) the PEPNet criteria for effective practices (criteria related to purpose and activities, organization and management, youth development, workforce development, and evidence of success); (4) PEPNet self-assessment (using the PEPNet self-assessment; the PEPNet self-assessment questions, the self-assessment matrix, and the PEPNet builder certification form); and (5) PEPNet recognition (the notice of intent to apply, the process to apply for recognition, demonstrating evidence of effectiveness, additional tips, peer review, benefits of recognition). Lists of 13 recommended resources, PEPNet awardees, National Youth Employment Coalition members (NYEC), PEPNet working group, and NYEC executive committee members are appended. (MN)

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PEP

Effective Practices Criteria Workbook

Building Quality Programs for America's Youth

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NATIONAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COALITION
A proud member of

Youth Development
Evidence of Success
Workforce Development
Quality Management
PEPNet
Promising and Effective Practices Network

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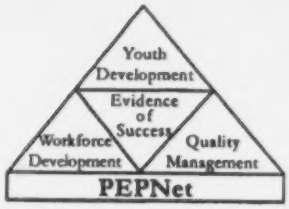
About PEPNet



PEPNet (the Promising and Effective Practices Network) is the nation's premier resource on what works in youth employment and development. With information and materials based on practices and research in the field, PEPNet offers youth initiatives, policy makers and funders a knowledge base of effective strategies and approaches; opportunities for professional development and networking; and a capacity-building process of self assessment and continuous improvement. The National Youth Employment Coalition manages PEPNet with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Pinkerton Foundation. The PEPNet acronym and logo are trademarks of the National Youth Employment Coalition.

PEPNet is a partner in the Workforce Excellence Network

About NYEC

The National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) is a network of nearly 200 youth employment/development organizations dedicated to promoting policies and initiatives that help young people succeed in becoming lifelong learners, productive workers and self-sufficient citizens. In addition to recognizing, promoting and increasing support for effective practices, NYEC's projects include the New Leaders Academy, designed to identify and develop rising leaders in the youth field and the formulation of an instrument capable of measuring Indicators of Youth Economic Achievement. Another project engages a diverse group of young people in the development of tools designed to facilitate dialogue with youth to address institutional racism. Other initiatives focus on building the capacity of organizations and communities to better serve youthful offenders and out-of-school youth. NYEC is funded by member dues and grants from the Ford Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Pinkerton Foundation, Texaco Inc., Kellogg Foundation, Tiger Foundation, and U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

For information about PEPNet or NYEC membership, materials or resources,
fax (202) 659-0399 or visit www.nyec.org.
National Youth Employment Coalition
1836 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036
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Paul Masiarchin and Kate O'Sullivan, Editors; Ellen Wernick, Senior Consultant; Susan Kim, Designer

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PEPNet Registration Form

For **youth programs, funders, policy makers, researchers** and others interested in effective practices for youth employment and youth development.

Please take a few moments to complete this form and return it to NYEC. Having this information allows us to keep you up to date on PEPNet's activities and latest publications. Just as importantly, this form allows us to capture the impact of PEPNet so we can make the case to continue expanding PEPNet's tools and services.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State/Province, Zip: _____ _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Web: _____

How do you plan to use PEPNet?

Youth Programs:

- ☐ We intend to use the PEPNet knowledge base.
- ☐ We intend to use the Improvement Process.
  - ☐ 1. We intend to undertake the Self Assessment.
  - ☐ 2. We have used the Self Assessment and are ready to apply for the status of PEPNet Builder.
  - ☐ 3. We hope to apply for PEPNet Recognition and will read the suggestions on p. 55.
- ☐ other (explain below)

Others:

We intend to use PEPNet to...

- ☐ inform policy development.
- ☐ inform funding decisions.
- ☐ inform WIA implementation.
- ☐ other (explain below).

Please BRIEFLY tell us who you are and how you heard about PEPNet:

Please submit this registration form to:

National Youth Employment Coalition
1836 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Fax: (202) 659-0399
Email: pm@nyec.org

or register online on the Improvement Process page: www.nyec.org/pepnet

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This document is available on-line at www.nyec.org

Cover photos feature (from l to r): Youth from the Los Angeles Conservation Corps Environmental Awareness Program clean up Ballona Creek; graduates from the Work Group's Youth Corps program share a celebratory moment; and trainees in the Work Group's Youth Corps program participate in work-based learning activities.

this Workbook

This Workbook is a tool and a resource on effective practices. To start, flip through it, explore, and find how it will be most useful to YOU. As you use this book and the PEPNet Criteria, we recommend you also consult PEPNet's website at www.nyec.org/pepnet, for a wealth of examples on effective practice organized under the PEPNet criteria.

This Workbook contains:

- **Using PEPNet** (p. 5). Explanation of how you can use the PEPNet Criteria, with examples from practitioners, funders, workforce investment agencies and other policymakers.
- **PEPNet Registration Form** (p. *i*). The entry point to PEPNet. Return this simple form to access PEPNet's materials, network and information.
- **Introduction** (p. 1). Background, context, goals, resources and benefits of PEPNet. How youth initiatives, funders, policy makers and others can benefit from PEPNet.
- **Improvement Process for Programs** (p. 11). A step-by-step explanation of PEPNet's continuous improvement cycle for program development.
- **PEPNet Criteria for Effective Practices** (p. 17). Detailed explanation of PEPNet's Criteria, based on research and practice.
- **PEPNet Self Assessment** (p. 33). The self assessment is a process by which an initiative answers the question, "Where are we?" It is a set of questions an initiative can use to diagnose its quality. An initiative may use this tool at any time to examine itself, document successes and plan improvements. Programs may apply for designation as PEPNet Builders after completing the Self Assessment.
- **PEPNet 2001 Recognition** (p. 51). The process, timetable and tips for applying for PEPNet recognition and peer review.
- **Appendices** (p. 61). Includes Recommended References, representing a few important and timely resources available around the topic of effective youth practice. Also includes a list of current PEPNet Awardees.

This workbook may be downloaded from www.nyec.org.

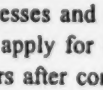
What's New in 2002

The 2002 Effective Practices Criteria Workbook closely follows the format and content of the 2001 version. As you page through this year's document, you will notice the following enhancements, based on our experiences and suggestions from youth professionals from around the country.

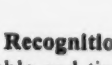
The "Using PEPNet" section is new. This section describes, with specific examples, how youth practitioners, WIA entities, policy makers, funders and others can uses PEPNet's resources to improve the field of youth employment and youth development.

Another major change is found in the "PEPNet Recognition" section. Formerly titled, "PEPNet Application," we have now removed the actual application from the Workbook and have placed it on the PEPNet website: www.nyec.org/pepnet (also available by fax request at (202) 659-0399). This allows us to make annual changes on the application in a more timely fashion by separating it from the rest of the Workbook, helps to keep the Workbook more timeless, and makes it easier to distinguish between regular and renewal applications. It will also lessen the work of applicants by eliminating their need to re-type the application questions. The "Recognition" section in this book includes enhanced tips and information to help applicants; if you are interested in completing a PEPNet application, be sure to read pp. 51 – 60.

KEY:



Numbered triangles delineate steps in the PEPNet Improvement Process.



Lettered triangles delineate milestones in the PEPNet Improvement Process.

Introduction to PEPNet

What is the Promising and Effective Practices Network?

PEPNet is a powerful framework for program improvement, a system for national recognition and one of the country's premier resources on what works in youth development and employment. It offers access to a rich knowledge base of effective practice, networking connections around the country and opportunities for professional development and program validation.

PEPNet can help people in the youth development/employment field make sure they are either running a quality initiative or supporting effective programming. And most of this help is free.

If you are looking for ...
- A framework for comparison and improvement
- Information about what works in youth employment and development
- Recognition of your program's exemplary practices
- Networking connections around the country and opportunities for professional development

... then please read on!

Where did the PEPNet Criteria come from?

PEPNet emerged from effective initiatives in the field, augmented with information from research, educational reform efforts and the "quality movement." In 1996, NYEC and a national Working Group of practitioners, policy makers and researchers identified practices common to effective programs and organized these into 5 broad categories:
- Purpose and Activities
- Organization and Management
- Youth Development
- Workforce Development
- Evidence of Success

How does PEPNet use the Criteria to reach its goals?

Recognizing high standards of effective practice.
The Criteria are the basis for selecting PEPNet Awardees. Since 1996, more than 200 initiatives have completed the *PEPNet Application for Recognition* and undergone the rigorous PEPNet review process, with 61 recognized as PEPNet Awardees. *(See pp. 64-65 for a list of Awardees.)*

Building a knowledge base of what works.
Using the Critieria, PEPNet has been able to "mine" the youth employment/development field, asking practitioners questions to ascertain how, from practical experience, they implement the elements of the criteria—what strategies, techniques and approaches they use. The PEPNet Awardees are the primary source of the "hows" of effective practice. The result is a rich database of information on the PEPNet Criteria, reinforcing their importance and providing a wealth of examples of what effective programs and initiatives actually do.

Sharing information from the knowledge base.
Youth initiatives generally operate only within their local communities, often with little opportunity to share their work and practices with others in the field. PEPNet enables effective initiatives to provide policy makers, funders and others with more than anecdotes about what works. Four PEPNet-recognized programs took the lessons learned from PEPNet to Capitol Hill, testifying in both the House and Senate as Congress drafted the Workforce Investment Act.

PEPNet also shares its growing wealth of information through written materials, conferences (PEPNet Institutes), workshops, the network of PEPNet Awardees and the World Wide Web.

Improving the field.
The PEPNet Criteria themselves are a powerful framework for improvement, and PEPNet has enhanced their usefulness with tools such as the **Self Assessment and Application for Recognition**. PEPNet encourages programs to engage in a process of continual improvement and works with policy makers and funders to use the Criteria

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and the other PEPNet tools to promote effective programming.

Using the Criteria can also help youth organizations better meet the requirements of major federal workforce legislation. The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) reflects many of the practices identified by PEPNet as central for effective youth employment/development programming. These include long-term comprehensive services, work-based learning, extended follow-up services, youth development activities, adult mentoring, and different outcomes for youth of different ages. (For more information on how PEPNet Criteria align with WIA, visit www.nyec.org/pepnet/network.htm) In the solicitation for Youth Opportunity! applicants, the U.S. Department of Labor referred to the PEPNet Criteria as similar to the core principles of the Youth Opportunity Initiative.

And PEPNet's message is spreading to other countries. Canada used PEPNet as the model for case studies at a federal convening of the Asian Pacific Economic Consortium and a group of organizations in South Africa is drawing from PEPNet to create criteria for effective youth development programs in that nation.

Connecting the youth field with other quality initatives.
PEPNet applies the concepts of continuous improvement and quality management from the private and public sectors to youth employment/development programs. PEPNet grew out of a larger "quality movement," which emphasizes that organizations need to take responsibility for improving their own capacity by examining what they are doing and improving performance and results. The quality movement started in the business world and expanded to public organizations. One example is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program, overseen by the U.S. Department of Commerce, for the business, education and health care sectors. Baldrige was a foundation for PEPNet, and several sections of the 2001 Baldrige Education Criteria are quoted in this document.

In the last several years the U.S. Department of Labor has applied this quality movement specifically toward workforce development and has brought several quality initiatives together via Workforce Excellence Network (WEN). WEN is the national leadership entity charged with promoting, facilitating, validating and marketing performance excellence in the new workforce investment system. WEN seeks to create a world-class workforce development system highlighting continuous improvement tools and approaches, including the Malcolm Baldrige criteria. To keep a prominent focus on youth efforts, NYEC is collaborating with WEN and PEPNet is a WEN partner.

PEPNet is a partner in the Workforce Excellence Network

What's in the PEPNet Knowledge Base?

PEPNet offers a variety of free tools and professional development opportunities to help you improve youth programming and build capacity.

TOOLS: These tools are available for free on the PEPNet web site, www.nyec.org/pepnet. Hard copies may be ordered from NYEC by fax request to (202) 659-0399.

PEPNet Criteria for Effective Practices:
This document provides a point-by-point examination of each of the 22 PEPNet Criteria. The Criteria, organized into five categories, can help youth initiatives document and improve their services and also inform policy makers, funders and the public about what works for youth.

PEPNet Improvement Process for Programs:
PEPNet offers a seven-step process that engages youth programs in continuous improvement, based on the PEPNet Criteria for Effective Practices, which may culminate in national recognition as a PEPNet Awardee. Through this process, programs can receive acknowledgment at four levels — milestones in the process of continuous improvement: PEPNet Builder, PEPNet Promising Program, PEPNet Awardee, PEPNet Renewal Awardee.

Self Assessment:
Using this set of questions, based on the PEPNet Criteria, an initiative can diagnose its effectiveness, document success, develop staff, enhance teamwork and identify and plan improvements. Initiatives completing a PEPNet Self Assessment can achieve the national designation of APEPNet Builder.

Index to Effective Practices:
The index includes over 500 specific effective practices identified from PEPNet Awardees and organized by the PEPNet Criteria categories. The Index makes it possible for you to search for information by a specific practice (examples include follow-up, staff development, youth leadership, employer engagement). The Index is based on information contained in the applications of the PEPNet Awardees.

Awardee Profiles:
PEPNet has developed a 2-3 page case study of each of the 51 active PEPNet Awardees, with contact information, a brief description of the program and its background, mission and target population and examples of effective practices for each Criteria category. The practices in the profiles are from the program's PEPNet Application and are referenced in the Index to Effective Practice.

Funding Strategies and Demographics Chart:
The chart documents sources of funding for each of the PEPNet Awardees. The chart is intended to help you find Awardees that serve populations of interest so that you can examine their practices and funding more closely.

Application:
Each spring, NYEC invites programs to apply for national recognition. All applicants receive detailed comments from a panel of volunteer peer reviewers. The highest level of PEPNet recognition is the prestigious PEPNet Award, for applicants illustrating effectiveness across all five PEPNet Criteria categories. Applicants who demonstrate effectiveness in Purpose and Activities plus two other categories may receive the **designation of PEPNet Promising Program.** Applications are due April 18, 2002.

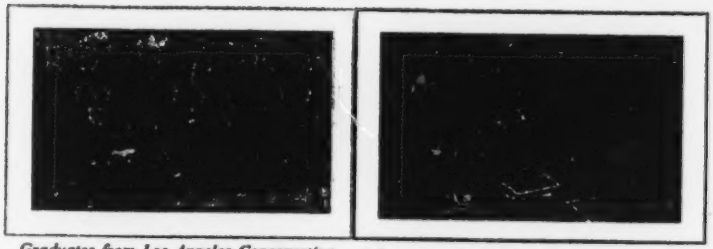
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: For more information about PEPNet's activities, visit our website at www.nyec.org or call (202) 659-1064.

PEPNet Institutes:
Institutes focus on effective practice—what is working on the ground level in youth employment/development programming. The workshops are led by PEPNet Awardees but promote dialogue and the sharing of information among all participants. PEPNet Institutes are a powerful opportunity to network with and learn from a diverse group of practitioners committed to young people.

PEPNet Reviewers:
Each year teams of PEPNet reviewers, volunteers from the field of youth employment and youth development, work together to recommend applicants for PEPNet Recognition. Reviewers read approximately four 40-page applications and work in teams to determine if the program should be granted PEPNet recognition and develop feedback. The entire process tends to take about 3-4 days of reviewers' time (including one day of required training) over a four-week period in May-June. Past reviewers have told us it was an energizing experience which not only allowed them to help other programs improve, but also provided them with valuable professional development—networking with other youth professionals and exploring ideas about what works for youth.

New Leaders Academy:
A separate project of NYEC. Rising staff in the youth employment/development field may apply for this year-long fellowship, which includes training in management, policy and effective youth practice.

Using PEPNet



Graduates from Los Angeles Conservation Corps share a proud moment.

A "meeting of minds" at the Career Development Program of LEAP (Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential).

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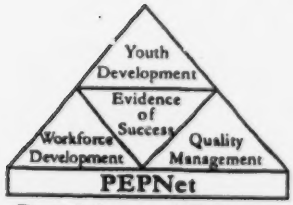


Promising and Effective Practices Network

How Practitioners can use PEPNet

Practitioners want to make their youth employment and development initiatives more effective. They can use the PEPNet Criteria to:

- Learn what works;
- Document success;
- Plan improvements;
- Get recognition;
- Share information;
- Contribute to a database of effective practice; and
- Inform the development of new programs.

PEPNet offers practitioners a continuous improvement process that incorporates self assessment, capacity building, networking, recognition and self assessment. Program directors and staff can use the PEPNet Criteria, in the form of the Self Assessment, to compare their work and processes against effective practices; improve their activities; learn about effective approaches; and develop staff capacity.

Practitioners can then use the Criteria, in the form of the Application for Recognition, to receive written feedback from peer reviewers and, if judged to meet the PEPNet Criteria, receive acknowledgment and national recognition for effective practice.

Some Examples

- **Job Link,** an initiative in Cleveland, Ohio, that helps special education students transition from school to work, found conducting the PEPNet Self-Assessment "both enlightening and liberating." Reviewing the criteria provided validation for the premise that all aspects of a student's development are equally important. It also pointed out that the project offered limited opportunity for community service and volunteer experiences for the students. Job Link began seeking additional funds to provide these opportunities. The initiative applied for recognition and was selected a PEPNet Awardee in 2001.

- The **Baltimore City Fire Cadet Program,** a Renewal Awardee in 2000, found its involvement in PEPNet raised national consciousness about what the program is doing. Program coordinators have spoken about effective youth development practices at numerous local, state and national conferences. The program model has been replicated in Ohio, Arizona and Michigan and has been adopted as the "National Program" of the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters.

- Dozens of youth-serving programs send staff to the renowned annual **PEPNet Institute.** There they participate in interactive workshops led by PEPNet Awardees and network with program practitioners from across the nation. According to one participant, "This provides us with an excellent opportunity to learn from other service providers and to share ideas. The forum is open to voice your opinions and concerns in a safe environment."

- Hundreds of programs use the tools available on the PEPNet page on the **NYEC website** (www.nyec.org/pepnet). Comments from some of these visitors include: "We enjoy using the website to stay abreast with what is going on across the nation." "The index to effective practices is one of the resources we use to design our training efforts when responding to RFPs." "PEPNet is a good resource for annual program evaluations and/or quarterly management retreats."

- Many practitioners volunteer to serve on the peer **PEPNet Review Board** during the annual PEPNet recognition process. They and their organizations indicate this experience is both instructive and personally rewarding. According to Andi Liebenbaum, a PEPNet Reviewer from Los Angeles, "The PEPNet review process ensures that the field of PEPNet Awardees is, indeed, outstanding and representative of the very best programs. It guarantees that PEPNet represents an ideal in

programming. Having been a PEPNet Reviewer myself, I appreciate how difficult and at the same time rewarding the PEPNet Award process can be." Similarly, JoAnn Jastrzab, a PEPNet Reviewer from Cambridge, MA, states, "After three rounds as a reviewer, I look forward to the opportunity to participate in the PEPNet process. I especially appreciate the (often lively) interaction with my team members who represent the best in thoughtful, caring, and wise practitioners and policy makers. It's been very useful to my own professional development to have the opportunity to engage in discussions with folks who have different perspectives yet share a strong commitment to improving the life chances of young people."

How WIA Entities can use PEPNet

Workforce Investment Boards, Workforce Investment Areas and Youth Councils want to operate effective youth programs without reinventing the wheel. They need to determine what services to provide or solicit and decide which programs have the greatest potential for success. PEPNet's resources and tools can help these entities:

- Understand what works
- Spur discussion and community consensus
- Ensure policies are coherent and viable
- Develop a youth plan that includes nationally-recognized practices that work
- Improve review and selection
- Facilitate contracting and oversight
- Identify technical assistance needs
- Offer professional development opportunities
- Enhance organizational governance

Some Examples

- Youth Program Managers in **Riverside County, California** and **Fort Worth, Texas** used the PEPNet Criteria to spur discussion (and move toward agreement) at community forums addressing WIA.

- The Youth Design Team at **Northwest Washington Private Industry Council**, a direct service provider now working under WIA, undertook the PEPNet Self Assessment to determine how well its comprehensive youth program addressed the PEPNet Criteria. Among the results of the self assessment: the 10 program elements of the Youth Program in WIA were imbedded with youth development in mind and the program delivery system was structured to be progressive; all workforce preparation was focused around local employer-validated skills; all youth develop a competency-based personal career plan, which is connected to academics through the school-to-career initiatives and there is a strong emphasis on the connection between work and learning; youth/adult relationships and opportunities for youth leadership are part of the system; and there is a strong emphasis on skill development with portfolio documentation with a minimum of 12-month follow-up.

- The **City of Cincinnati Employment and Training Division** and **Riverside County, California** incorporated the PEPNet Criteria in their contracting cycles. Asking questions derived from the PEPNet Self Assessment on RFPs enabled them to incorporate the responses into contracts, to monitor to ensure that performance standards were met and to evaluate a program both qualitatively and quantitatively, holding contractors accountable for outcomes.

- Attending PEPNet Institutes and learning what works encouraged **Work Advantage**, in **Fort Worth, Texas**, to initiate a special program for youthful offenders at a local housing project, to incorporate mentoring into most of its programs and to revamp the youth service delivery system, which resulted in the letting of 14 summer youth contracts based on sound principles of youth development and meeting all WIA requirements. A PEPNet workshop on collaboration led this WIB to help local youth organizations overcome turf battles and submit collaborative proposals that

resulted in three WIA year-round programs that combine the expertise of two or more organizations under one contract. A session on connecting youth to post-secondary education generated a proposal from a local community college for a college career prep program.

- The **Mayor's Office of Workforce Development,** in the **City of Chicago,** provided its WIA youth grantees with training on conducting a PEPNet Self Assessment and the MOWD staff with training about how to use the PEPNet Criteria. The sessions conducted by PEPNet staff offered a forum for the two groups to talk about what they need from each other to be more effective.

- The **New York City Department of Employment** trained its staff how to use the PEPNet Self Assessment with grantees to identify technical assistance needs. The **New York City Out-of-School Youth Task Force** includes the PEPNet principles in its criteria for programs.

- The **State of California** 5-year plan for WIA noted PEPNet, and the state mentioned PEPNet as a resource in its Request for Proposals.

- The **Elyria (OH) WIA youth council** used many of the PEPNet principles in their work and provided copies of the *Criteria Workbook* to all their youth service providers.

- **Philadelphia's youth council** used PEPNet and other national resources in developing the Core Standards for Philadelphia Youth Programs.

- Following a PEPNet workshop session at its state youth development conference, the **State of Oregon** workforce development department sponsored 8 agencies to attend the PEPNet Institute, with each agency agreeing to complete the PEPNet Self Assessment and become a PEPNet Builder. **Worksystems, Inc.**, the workforce investment board in **Portland, Oregon,** also used PEPNet as a means for professional development, subsidizing up to $700 per individual staff member to attend the annual PEPNet Institute.

How Policy makers, funders and others can use PEPNet

Policy makers, funders, national networks, technical assistance providers and other groups want to promote programming that works. They can use the PEPNet Criteria and tools to:

- Gain a clear picture of what a quality program is
- Inform the development of criteria to guide decisions regarding funding, accreditation or service delivery
- Improve the assessment and selection of youth initiatives
- Ensure policies are coherent and viable
- Help initiatives increase capacity
- Identify areas for technical support
- Develop their own systems

Some Examples

- The **Choctaw Nation** in **Mississippi** is using PEPNet as a model to change its entire service delivery system for children and families affected by substance abuse and mental illness. Several of these efforts involve establishing assessment tools, performance standards or accreditation procedures.

- The **American Cancer Society** is planning to base a self assessment for tobacco control coalitions on the PEPNet Self Assessment.

- The **Massachusetts Best Practices Network** seeks to identify and publicly recognize strong programs in the Commonwealth that serve youth. It drew extensively from PEPNet in developing self assessment and application systems.

- The **National Association of Service and Conservation Corps** drew heavily from PEPNet in planning their standards process for corps and, with assistance from PEPNet staff, crosswalked the NASCC standards with the PEPNet Criteria.

- The **National Council of La Raza** invited NYEC to advise them on their strategic planning for their workforce development activities with affiliates and is incorporating PEPNet principles in its Hispanic Youth Workforce Development Initiative with the PepsiCo Corporation.

- The **National Governors Association** and the **National Council of State Legislatures** had staff participate as PEPNet reviewers, recommending applicants for PEPNet recognition, networking with other youth professionals and exploring ideas about what works for youth.

- The **Fannie Mae Foundation** drew on the PEPNet Criteria for its youth employment grant making.

- Ben & Jerry's **PartnerShop Program** is looking at PEPNet Awardees as possible sites for expansion of this private funder program for youth job training opportunities.

- The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** distributed PEPNet materials at a recent Funding Workshop.

- The **Edna McConnell Clark Foundation** is using PEPNet's body of information to inform its new youth development funding strategy and is looking at PEPNet Awardees as it seeks high-performing organizations to support.

- The **Youth Development and Research Fund** has used the PEPNet Criteria and Self Assessment as a foundation for a needs assessment, to assist in developing a peer-to-peer exchange program for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 22 Making Connections sites around the country.

- **SPR Associates** is using PEPNet materials for the design and implementation of a Court-Involved youth program they are helping to develop in California.

PEPNet

Improvement Process for Programs

A trainee at the Gulf Coast Trades Center hones his skills.

A youth from the Career Development Program of Bay Cove Academy explores his musical interests in a recording studio.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Youth Development
Evidence of Success
Workforce Development
Quality Management
PEPNet

Promising and Effective Practices Network

The PEPNet Improvement Process for Programs

The purpose of continuous improvement is to achieve ever-higher levels of effectiveness for an initiative's stakeholders. PEPNet offers youth employment and development programs a seven-step cyclical process of continuous improvement that incorporates self assessment, reflection and planning, capacity building, external assessment, recognition and, again, self assessment. Within the process are four milestones (noted A-D below), acknowledging specific accomplishments. Funders, policy makers and others in the field may find it helpful to use and adapt PEPNet's process as they work with programs to ensure quality and identify support needs.

Register

Programs begin the process by submitting a ***registration form*** expressing interest in using PEPNet and requesting PEPNet materials.

Self Assessment

The process of continuous improvement begins by analyzing the program and its practices and comparing these against reliable criteria. To help with this process, PEPNet provides its ***Self Assessment***, a set of questions derived from the PEPNet Criteria. The Self Assessment enables a program to document its successes, identify weaknesses and plan improvements. The Self Assessment Matrix (pp. 42-46) is provided as an internal tool to guide completion of the Self Assessment.

Milestone – **PEPNet Builder.** This acknowledges a program for committing to self assessment and improvement. A program achieves this status by submitting a ***Builder Certification Form*** (a brief summary of its Self Assessment process, p. 47) to NYEC after completing the Self Assessment. PEPNet Builders can use the designation as certification of their commitment to continuous improvement.

Reflection and Planning/Capacity Building

Having undertaken the Self Assessment, staff members reflect on the process, evaluate lessons learned, and make plans. This is a key stage at which to use PEPNet resources (see PEPNet Knowledge Base, p. 2) and other resources to work on improvement areas, promote successes, develop staff and enhance teamwork. It is also the point at which a youth initiative decides whether to apply for external assessment (peer review) and PEPNet recognition. Because the application process is time consuming, PEPNet provides PEPNet Builders with a tool, the ***Pre-Application Exercise****, to help determine if the program would benefit from applying.

Apply for External Assessment and PEPNet Recognition

Programs applying for feedback and recognition submit the ***Intent to Apply*** form (p. 53) by March of the award year and the full ***Application for Recognition*** by the April deadline.

Peer Review

A PEPNet volunteer panel reviews each of the applications. The panel consists of youth employment practitioners, researchers and policy makers who know and understand youth programming. After reviewing an application individually, panel members meet to develop a consensus regarding the recommendation for the PEPNet Award and to prepare comments to be sent to the applicant. The feedback addresses both the content and clarity of the response regarding the PEPNet Criteria and provides suggestions for improvement.

Milestone – **PEPNet Promising Program.** This acknowledges a program that submits a completed application and meets the PEPNet Criteria for Purpose and Activities and two other PEPNet categories. PEPNet Promising Programs can use the designation as certification of their promising approaches and their commitment to quality programming and continuous improvement. They also will be encouraged to reapply for recognition the following year.

* ***The Pre-Application Exercise*** *is provided by NYEC to all PEPNet Builders and is available online on the Improvement Process page at www.nyec.org/pepnet or by fax request at (202) 659-0399.*

6 Receive Recognition

Applicants that demonstrate effectiveness in all five PEPNet Categories are recognized at the PEPNet Awards Ceremony in Washington, DC, are profiled in PEPNet and NYEC materials, and become part of PEPNet's prestigious effective practices network.

Milestone C – PEPNet Awardee. This recognizes a program that meets the PEPNet Criteria in all five PEPNet categories. PEPNet Awardees are exemplars of quality programming and continuous improvement and national leaders in the field of youth employment. The PEPNet Award has a duration of 4 years.

Milestone D – PEPNet Renewal Awardee. In order to maintain PEPNet Awardee status, PEPNet requires all Awardees to renew their awards every 4 years, to ensure they continue to meet all categories of PEPNet Criteria. PEPNet Renewal Awardees are recognized for continued excellence in the youth employment/development field. They also are adding to a knowledge base of practices contributing to program longevity.

7 Networking/Capacity Building

As recognized programs, PEPNet Awardees connect with other Awardees, make presentations around the country, and assist youth employment and development programs, policy makers and others requesting help. They use PEPNet resources to continuously improve and inform the PEPNet knowledge base with examples of effective practice (see PEPNet Knowledge Base, p. 3).

2 Self Assessment

PEPNet Awardees complete the full cycle of continuous improvement 4 years after receiving the Award. Awardees conduct a self assessment before applying for Renewal status. An Awardee submits the ***Intent to Renew*** by February of their renewal year and completes and submits the ***PEPNet Application*** by the deadline in April. **PEPNet Applications are available online on the** Improvement Process page at www.nyec.org/pepnet or by fax request at 202-659-0399.

Benefits of Participation

- Framework for Improvement
- Networking
- Access to PEPNet Knowledge Base
- Professional Development

A

Milestone A: PEPNet Builders
- Certificate of Designation
- Listed in NYEC Newsletter and Website

B

Milestone B: PEPNet Promising Programs
- All Benefits of PEPNet Builders
- Free External Evaluation/Feedback from PEPNet Review Board
- Discounts at PEPNet Institutes

C

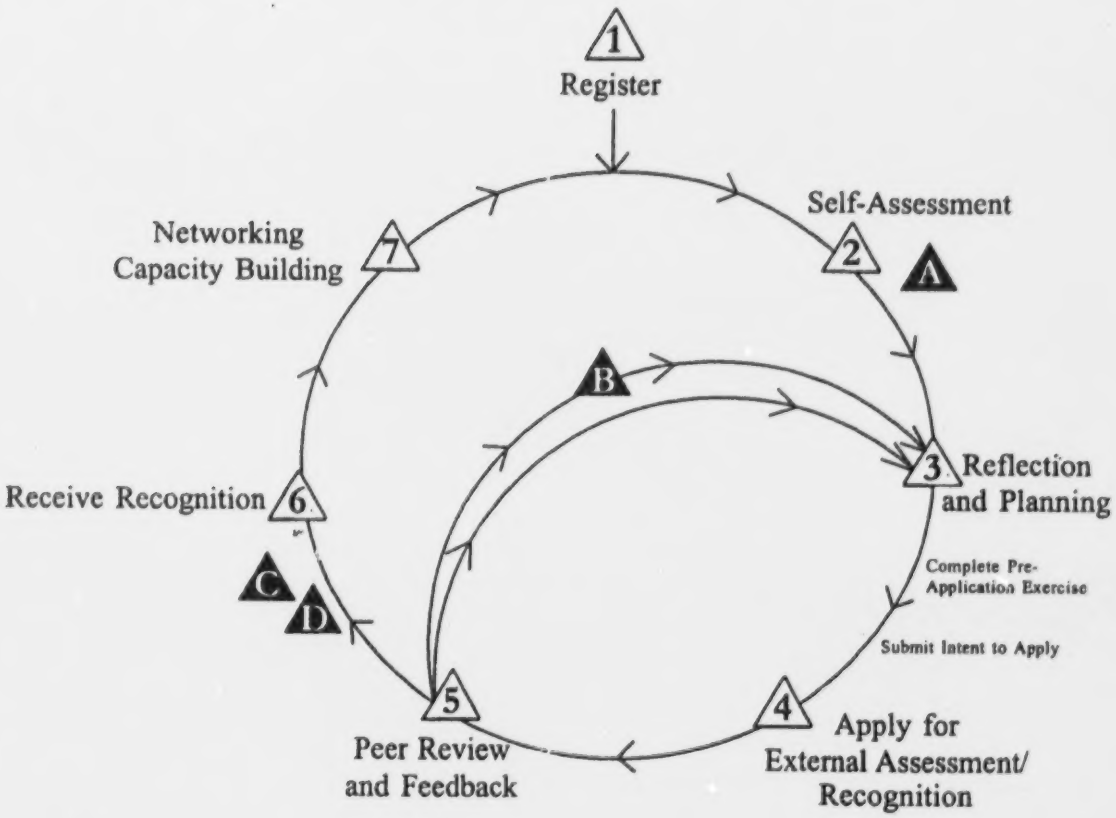
Milestone C: PEPNet Awardees
- All Benefits of PEPNet Promising Programs
- Awards Ceremony and Plaque
- Nationally Recognized Exemplar of Effective Practice
- External Validation
- Promotion, Publicity, Visibility
- Contribute to PEPNet Knowledge Base

D

Milestone D: PEPNet Renewal Awardees
- All Benefits of PEPNet Awardees
- Nationally Recognized Exemplar of Ongoing Effective Practice

The PEPNet Improvement Process

A Cycle of Continuous Improvement

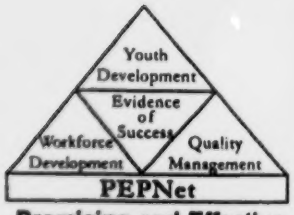


Milestones

- A Builder
- B Promising Program
- C Awardee
- D Renewal Awardee

The Baltimore City Fire Cadet Program not only teaches young people skills -- it instills a sense of pride as well.

The milestones are many at the CS² program of Commonwealth Corporation.



Promising and Effective Practices Network

PEPNet Criteria for Effective Practices

1. Purpose and Activities

PA1 Mission
PA2 Target Youth
PA3 Activities

2. Organization and Management

OM1 Leadership
OM2 Staff Development
OM3 Collaboration
OM4 Continuous Improvement
OM5 Funding

3. Youth Development

YD1 Youth/Adult Relationships
YD2 Building Youths' Responsibility and Leadership Skills
YD3 Individual Focus and Age/Stage Appropriate Outlook
YD4 Family and Peer Support
YD5 Supportive Services and Opportunities
YD6 Building Sense of Self and of Group

4. Workforce Development

WD1 Career Awareness, Planning and Readiness
WD2 Employer Engagement
WD3 Work and Learning Connection
WD4 Competencies Emphasis
WD5 Extended Follow-up

5. Evidence of Success

ES1 Descriptive Data
ES2 Outcome Data
ES3 Comparative Measures

The PEPNet Criteria provide a framework for initiative self assessment, for making PEPNet awards, for giving feedback to applicants and for sharing information on effective practices. Understanding and using the Criteria can help youth initiatives document and improve their services. The Criteria can also inform policy makers, funders and the public about what works for youth.

The Criteria, organized into five broad "Categories," were developed by a diverse working group of youth professionals. The group believed these criteria reflect the key elements that contribute to effective programming. This belief has been reinforced and refined by six years of PEPNet experience.

Purpose and Activities (Category 1)

Effective initiatives have clear and well-understood aims and a coherent, well-organized set of components and activities to attain them.

Effective programs do not try to do everything for everyone. Their design and operation reflect clear priorities and goals in terms of the type of youth they target, what they seek to accomplish and the kinds of services, supports, and activities they offer.

There is no single model for an effective youth employment/development program. Many different kinds of approaches work for young people. However, whatever the approach, the coherence of purpose and activities is key to effectiveness. The mission and its accomplishment form the backbone of an initiative and is reflected throughout the other PEPNet categories and criteria.

> Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:
> - Creating a sense of organizational purpose through screening and orientation
>
> *www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm*

PA1 Mission: The initiative presents a clear and consistent mission.

The mission is the heart of the initiative and provides the basis for continuous improvement. With a clear, consistent mission, the initiative leaders, staff, participants and other stakeholders are able to adapt to new priorities or challenges while staying focused on the initiative's goals. In effective initiatives, all stakeholders periodically revisit the mission to ensure its continued relevance.

Where the initiative is part of a larger, multi-program organization, both the organization and initiative should have a clearly understood mission/purpose. The aims of the initiative should relate to and support those of the parent organization.

PA2 Target Youth: There is a logical relationship between the initiative's mission, activities and the youth it serves.

Many young people can benefit from youth employment/development programming. Effective initiatives realize that they cannot serve everyone. Instead, they target, recruit and select the young people most likely to benefit from the program's purpose and activities. In doing so, they often establish referral linkages with organizations and agencies serving those youth.

PA3 Activities: The initiative's mission shapes its structure and offerings.

The match between purpose and activities runs throughout the PEPNet Criteria. For example, if an initiative's mission includes an intent to improve academic achievement of young people, it should offer appropriate academic services or links to them. If an initiative aims to build responsibility, the program should include opportunities for making decisions.

Organization and Management (Category 2)

Effective initiatives are well managed, work in collaboration with others and are committed to continuous improvement.

This category addresses the internal operations of the initiative and the extent to which they support "quality management," a concept adopted by many businesses and public organizations. Effective initiatives recognize that organizational stability; qualified, committed, ethical staff; low staff turnover; good management; stable leadership; and commitment to continuous improvement, including stakeholder involvement and use of data; are key elements of quality management.

The points addressed in this category are also factors in the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for education institutions. The quotes used below, amended to reflect youth initiatives, are from the 2001 Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, "Education Criteria: Core Values, Concepts and Framework." (For full cite, see Recommended References, p. 63).

OM1 Leadership: The initiative maintains a strong, engaged, continuous and competent leadership.

"A [youth initiative's] senior leaders should set directions and create a [youth]-focused, learning-oriented climate; clear and visible values; and high expectations...[and] balance the needs of all stakeholders. Leaders should ensure the creation of strategies, systems, and methods for achieving excellence.... The values and strategies should help guide all activities and decisions of [the initiative]. Senior leaders should inspire and motivate all...staff, encouraging them to contribute, to develop and learn, to be innovative, and to be creative....

"In addition to their important role within the organization, senior leaders have other avenues to strengthen [youth employment/development]. [These include] building community support and aligning community and business leaders and community services with this aim," (Baldrige Education Criteria, p. 1.)

Stable and continuous leadership is key to organizational success. However, longevity in itself does not ensure effectiveness; also essential is strong, engaged and competent leadership that is committed to accomplishing the initiative's mission.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Maintaining continuous leadership

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

OM2 Staff Development: The initiative incorporates staff development as a management strategy.

"An organization's success depends increasingly on the knowledge, skills, innovative creativity and motivation of its...staff." (Baldrige Education Criteria, p. 2.) The Baldrige Criteria emphasize that staff success depends on having meaningful opportunities to develop and practice new knowledge and skills. Initiatives need to invest in the development of staff through ongoing education, training and opportunities for continuing growth in order to achieve staff stability and continuity.

Youth initiatives need staff that have an understanding of youth development and see young people as assets, not liabilities. As a first step, this means having clear, cogent minimum qualifications for individual staff positions and communicating high expectations. Staff must work well with youth and be committed to the growth and success of all participants regardless of race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation, gender, age, religion, physical or mental ability, or other group affiliation, as well as any barriers they may face (i.e., dropout, offender, etc). This may mean providing staff with opportunities to increase skills and competencies and heighten awareness of other groups and their understanding of the impacts of racial stereotyping and both covert and overt racism, sexism and other discrimination.

The initiative must also promote a management strategy that helps staff to become aware of institutional practices that may promote discrimination or racism. For example, do all youth have equal opportunities for advancement, job placements or leadership? Does the initiative make

geographic or transportation decisions that may discriminate (i.e., How can inner-city youth access suburban jobs? How does the program recruit new members from isolated neighborhoods or rural areas?). Do the staff, wall decorations, pictures and books reflect the diversity of the youth participants? Do staff members of diverse backgrounds interact with one another and set the standard as positive role models?

> Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:
> - Structuring release time for professional development
> - Staff career development plans
>
> *www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm*

OM3 Collaboration: The initiative leverages resources through collaboration.

"[Initiatives] need to build internal and external partnerships to better accomplish overall goals" (Baldrige Education Criteria, p. 3). Collaboration is working with other organizations to use and leverage all the resources of the community for youth. Collaborations are a key way that youth programs can accomplish an ambitious or broad mission, enabling an initiative to coordinate an array of community services and activities for youth rather than providing the supports directly or foregoing them completely.

Collaborations should be active and on-going and they can be both formal and informal. Collaboration means that an initiative has determined that some kind of relationship with another organization is in its best interest and will result in better services to participants and stakeholders, reduced costs or some other objective the initiative seeks to achieve.

> Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:
> - Building strong collaborative partnerships with a variety of community agencies
>
> *www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm*

OM4 Continuous Improvement: The initiative is committed to a continuous improvement strategy.

In order to achieve ever-higher levels of performance, an organization must continuously improve all that it does. Continuous improvement "needs to be embedded in the way [the initiative] operates [so that it]: (1) is a regular part of the daily work of all...staff and [youth]; (2) is practiced at personal, work unit/department and organizational levels; (3) results in solving problems at their source; (4) is focused on sharing knowledge throughout the organization; and (5) is driven by opportunities to effect significant change and do better. Sources for learning [can] include...staff ideas...research findings, [youth] and stakeholder input, best practice sharing, and benchmarking." (Baldrige Education Criteria, p. 2). Continuous improvement should be based on facts, such as data on your operations and results, and include systematic cycles of planning, implementation and evaluation.

Stakeholders, including youth, staff, funders, community members and employers, among others, can make significant contributions to improvement efforts. Effective programs use various approaches to determine stakeholder expectations and needs, to obtain and use their input, and to communicate to them initiative changes and successes. In particular, involving youth in continuous improvement not only enables the program to better meet youths' needs, it can be a major learning and growth opportunity for youth.

Continuous improvement calls for information and analysis. Effective initiatives develop systems that allow them to make fact-based decisions in planning, managing and improving operations. In this OM4 criterion, PEPNet examines how an initiative uses data for management decision making. For more about types of data an initiative might collect, see Category 5, Evidence of Success, on p. 31.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Using various measures to assess initiative progress
- Generating stakeholder feedback and sharing information with stakeholders
- Basing management decisions on analysis of information

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

OM5 Funding: The initiative attracts stable and diverse funding.

Funding is an ongoing challenge for youth employment/development initiatives. Without stable funding, an initiative will not be able to sustain services to youth. Effective programs make sure current (and potential) funders know what is happening in the initiative and keep them informed of program successes.

Although not a requirement for the PEPNet Award, PEPNet recognizes the importance of diverse funding sources. Effective initiatives, even those who get most of their funds from a single source, seek additional resources both to provide additional services and opportunities and to increase their financial independence. Non-financial resources—from in-kind donations to collaborations and more—can be important contributions as well.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Successfully diversifying funding
- Generating in-kind support

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

Also visit the PEPNet Awardee Funding Strategies and Demographics Chart on the PEPNet home page at *www.nyec.org/pepnet*

Youth Development (Category 3)

Effective initiatives consciously rely on youth development principles to identify activities and shape the program environment, structure and operations.

There has been increasing recognition that the most effective youth employment initiatives understand and build on the natural growth and development processes young people experience. "Youth development"—a point of view as much as a set of activities—encompasses the formal and informal ways that initiatives engage youth and encourage positive growth and development.

An understanding of youth development recognizes that:

- young people, particularly 14- to 25-year-olds, are undergoing a rapid, intensive and, for them, frequently confusing phase of human development;
- young people vary tremendously in their growth rates and maturity levels and are simultaneously developing physically, cognitively, socially, morally and emotionally;
- young people should be valued, appreciated and engaged as resources (rather than seen as passive recipients of service);
- a program environment must be a place youth want to come to, where they feel physically and emotionally safe, where they have fun bu are also challenged.

Youth development connects and integrates readily with a youth employment initiative. In fact, work in itself can be a powerful developmental tool, a means for learning, building responsibility and achieving personal development and growth. Effective initiatives depend on the incorporation of youth development thinking, principles and activities to provide varied and ongoing opportunities for young people to grow and mature.

Youth Development (n) A process which prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically and cognitively competent. Positive youth development addresses the broader developmental needs of youth, in contrast to deficit-based models which focus solely on youth problems. *(National Collaboration for Youth)*

For more background on Youth Development, visit the National Youth Development Information Center at www.nydic.org

YD1 Youth/Adult Relationships: The initiative nurtures sustained relationships between youth and caring, knowledgeable adults.

Research, experience and intuition all support the value to young people of connections with caring, competent adults. As noted in a recent compendium of evaluation studies by the American Youth Policy Forum (*More Things that DO Make a Difference*, p. x), "From first entry into [a program], caring, knowledgeable adults are critical to gaining a young person's trust and commitment. These adults can be teachers, counselors, mentors, case workers, community members, program directors or other trained individuals who understand and deeply care about youth, who provide young people with time and attention, work with small numbers of youth and can demonstrate that they are 'in for the long haul.' "

These relationships may be formal, connecting youth to a mentor within the initiative or at the workplace, and they may be informal, with the initiative providing opportunities for youth to interact with staff and neighborhood adults.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Creating strong staff/youth bonds
- Developing positive relationships between employer supervisors and youth

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

YD2 Building Youths' Responsibility and Leadership Skills: The initiative engages youth in their development and sets high expectations for them.

The American Youth Policy Forum's recent compendium (*More Things*, p. xi) stresses that "caring for young people also means guiding behavior, challenging students and insisting on personal responsibility and accountability. Youth will rise to the expectations of adults they trust and will achieve more positive outcomes in program settings with these characteristics." Effective initiatives help young people become responsible by setting high expectations, holding youth accountable, engaging them in new roles and giving them opportunities to lead.

Effective initiatives work to ensure that everyone involved in the program is committed to each youth's success and to communicate the highest expectations and belief in each young person. High expectations also demand accountability: effective programs provide structure and set clear, fair and consistently enforced limits.

Effective initiatives use both the initiative and the community to give youth opportunities to experiment with new roles and responsibilities. Opportunities for leadership are an important component of efforts to nurture responsibility. Service learning and community service have become increasingly recognized as effective mechanisms for giving youth the chance to see themselves as resources and contributors and to reinforce the notions of personal responsibility, involvement and leadership.

Encouraging youth responsibility and leadership also means listening to young people's input about the program, and engaging them in program improvement (see also OM4, above, p. 22).

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Different kinds of leadership roles for youth
- Utilizing community service to build responsibility and leadership

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

YD3 Individual Focus and Age/Stage Appropriate Outlook: The initiative tailors the program experience for each youth and also provides age and/or stage appropriate services for its participants.

Young people, particularly 14- to 25-year olds, vary tremendously in their maturity levels and their need for challenge and support.

Effective initiatives individualize services and activities for participants, keeping in mind each young person's goals and needs. In such programs, individual service plans and employability development plans become active documents that youth, family members and staff use to guide program activities and services and enable informed career decisions. An individualized plan, based on a thorough assessment, will look at any and all factors that impact a young person's development and success and will focus on assets as well as needs.

A youth development approach also means understanding and responding to the different ages and/or stages of development of participants. For example, less mature youth may not be ready for a job and may benefit from in-program work-like activities; older youth may be ready to take on an outside internship or work experience.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Staff working as a team to coordinate activities for each participant
- Sequencing activities so youth experience series of successes as they are ready
- Providing activities appropriate for different age groups

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

YD4 Family and Peer Support: The initiative encourages positive relationships with family and peers.

Young people have many influences outside the initiative which impact on their success in the program. An understanding of youth development recognizes that young people are part of and have roles in many areas—family, school, work, social groups.

Effective initiatives reach out to parents, guardians or other significant adults in a way that is appropriate for each participant. The more that programs can do to foster positive relationships with family members and encourage family members to commit to the young person's positive development, the more successful that young person will be in the long term. "Family" does not necessarily mean parents and it does not mean individuals who are negative influences on young people. "Family" can be a grandparent, a neighbor, a sibling—whoever is an important positive personal influence and support for a young person outside the program. Programs may also help to support the development of healthy family relationships.

Effective initiatives also understand that peers and peer groups are very strong influences and are too often negative ones. To ensure that peers have a positive influence, effective programs help young people forge peer and peer group relationships that support a young person's program attachment, achievement and success.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Engaging families in the youths' program experience
- Providing services for families
- Developing positive peer relations and peer groups

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

YD5 Supportive Services and Opportunities: The initiative provides youth with supportive services and opportunities beyond education and training.

Effective initiatives see the "whole young person," recognizing that youth have assets and needs beyond education and training, and work to connect young people with necessary and appropriate supports and opportunities.

Initiatives develop their in-house capacity to identify and provide services that help young people grow into well-adjusted citizens. Initiatives also forge linkages to other organizations to augment the range of services and resources afforded participants. Often supportive services cover basic needs, such as health, transportation, clothing, shelter or day care. But supportive services can also build assets, such as linking a young person with a love for the guitar to an instrument and music lessons.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Providing supportive services on site
- Linking with community organizations to provide a wide range of supports

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

YD6 Building Sense of Self and of Group: The initiative helps youth develop a sense of group membership while fostering a sense of identity and self.

Helping young people develop a positive sense of who they are is a key part of aiding their development and success in the workplace and in life. Effective programs address this in many ways, from personal and life skills development, to providing opportunities for youth to showcase their work and skills, to the use of journals, self-evaluation, and self-reflection.

In addition to helping participants grow their personal identity, initiatives recognize that young people need to develop attachments to larger groups, to belong somewhere. Some initiatives help their young participants build a group identity through uniforms, activities and meetings (also see peer groups, YD4 above).

Effective initiatives address issues faced by different groups, depending on the socio-demographic makeup of youth participants. These groups include, but are not limited to, racial, ethnic, gender, class, age, religion, sexual orientation or physical or mental ability. Initiatives emphasize some or all of the following depending on the needs and characteristics of the young people they work with:

- promoting tolerance and awareness of other groups;
- fostering awareness and pride in one's own culture;
- navigating and combating discrimination in the community, educational institution, workplace, etc.; and
- understanding the impact of racial stereotyping and both covert and overt racism, sexism and other discrimination.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Involving youth in self-reflection, decision making, life skills development
- Building group cohesion
- Promoting cultural awareness and navigating discrimination

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

Also visit the NYEC Institutional Racism page at *www.nyec.org/racism.htm*

Workforce Development (Category 4)

Effective initiatives emphasize the development of skills, knowledge and competencies that lead to careers and self-sufficiency and stress the connection between learning and work.

In 1990, The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was established to examine the demands of the workplace and whether young people were capable of meeting those demands. What they found was that more than half the young people in the country leave school without the knowledge or foundation required to find and hold a good job.

The objectives of youth employment/development have changed. Where job placement was once seen as the primary goal most effective programs now focus on helping young people develop the skills, knowledge and competencies required to succeed in the workforce. To accomplish that, workforce development components may include community service, academic instruction and career exploration and guidance in addition to job readiness workshops, work experience, internships and skills training.

Effective youth initiatives recognize and use work as a developmental tool. They make work a means for learning, for building responsibility, and for achieving personal development and growth.

SCANS Foundation Skills

Basic Skills: Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens and speaks.

Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn and reasons.

Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self esteem, sociability, self management and integrity and honesty.

More information on SCANS is available at www.nyec.org/pepnet under "Links to Other Effective Practices."

WD1 Career Awareness, Planning and Readiness: The initiative nurtures career awareness and embeds career planning and readiness throughout the program.

Young people who are exposed to a variety of educational and occupational options are more likely to focus on an initial career goal and make positive connections to work and education to pursue that goal. Career awareness and exploration activities encourage youth to identify their interests and consider a variety of goals and careers, including options that may not be traditional for their gender, race or ethnicity.

Another aspect of this criterion is helping youth to become job ready and be able to make rational and informed career decisions. For the first of these, initiatives help youth develop a work ethic and a positive attitude about work, have good communication skills, and know how to work with different personalities in the workplace. For the second, they offer career guidance and counseling.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Providing access to labor market information and job listings
- Involving youth in Career or Job Clubs, Career Days and Career Fairs
- Workplace readiness preparation

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

WD2 Employer Engagement: The initiative ensures that employers are actively engaged in the initiative.

Workforce development activities are most effective when they are relevant to actual workforce opportunities and needs. Youth employment programs traditionally involved employers in their job placement efforts, but as the concept of workforce development has expanded, so have the roles employers play.

In addition to providing employment and work experience, local businesses and public-sector employers can help design or inform curriculum, lend equipment, provide instructors, mentors and speakers and share their technical business

experience. In many locations, community-wide employer associations have been established to support workforce development efforts. Successful initiatives seek to involve, or become involved with, employers in ways that help accomplish the initiative's mission, strengthen its offerings and benefit young participants.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Employers sharing technical business expertise
- Employers providing instructional staff, facilities and other resources
- Establishing steering committees and advisory councils
- Teaming with joint labor/management training programs

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

WD3 Work and Learning Connection: The initiative relates academic learning to real-life work issues and situations, stresses active learning, and engages youth in challenging academic preparation.

Another important change in workforce development has been that of emphasizing the connection between learning and work. Federal efforts such as the Workforce Investment Act, School-To-Work Opportunities Act and grants for developing national skill standards by industry groups emphasize that connection. From SCANS to the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for Education, there is an emphasis on active learning and on the development of problem-solving skills. In today's knowledge economy, businesses are concerned about finding high quality, reliable employees who can learn. Effective initiatives help youth understand that learning is a continual process that occurs both inside and outside the classroom.

Academic preparation is an increasingly important factor for workplace success and effective initiatives are designing innovative ways to provide it. They may focus on helping young people earn a high school diploma (they may even operate a charter school) or helping learn about, enroll in and pay for college. Generally, programs serving out-of-school youth see GED preparation as only a first step in an academic component. They may integrate challenging academic work throughout program activities and they may provide support after a youth has been accepted at a college. An increasing number offer community college participation and credits as a program option.

Experiential learning relates academic learning to real-life, hands-on issues and situations and encourages young people to use their knowledge to solve problems and complete tasks typical to those in the workplace and the community. One type of experiential learning, work-based learning, provides opportunities for youth to experience the workplace environment first-hand. Work-based learning includes job shadowing, volunteer work, internships and paid work experience and can range from structured community service to apprenticeship programs. Other forms of experiential learning include project-based learning and service learning.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Connections to postsecondary opportunities
- Integrating the teaching curriculum around a career theme
- Structuring service learning and community service experiences

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

WD4 Competencies Emphasis: The initiative documents and communicates competencies gained by young people.

Participants in youth initiatives need to be able to communicate what they know and are able to do. A powerful way to do this is to document competencies—abilities needed to function well in work, education and life. Competencies can be general—"soft skills," like communication; others are occupation specific—"hard skills," like computer repairs.

When designing workforce development activities, effective initiatives ensure that the competencies developed are relevant to labor market and post-secondary requirements, and that there is a mechanism in place to document competency attainment.

As they document competencies, effective programs help youth understand the competencies they have gained, and how to communicate these to employers and others. Effective programs will help young people capture these and learn to use them in interviews, applications and more. Initiatives may also help young people to think of competencies gained outside the program. For example, a young person may not have worked before but has raised his two younger siblings and could talk about his competencies in organization, responsibility and time management.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Working with employers to validate industry-specific curricula
- Using SCANS and other nationally recognized tools to document competencies
- Assessing progress
- Using portfolios

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

WD5 Extended Follow-up: The initiative provides extended services and support.

Research has shown that in today's economy, youth progress through a series of jobs before they settle into the labor market in their late twenties. This is a natural progression, a part of development for most young people. Often this job hopping lacks coherence and each job does not connect to the next. However, when guided, young people can use each job to develop an ever-broadening set of skills and competencies that contributes to their career preparation. Thus, youth initiatives tend to be more effective when placement in a job or admission to a post-secondary institution after completing the program is not the end of their service. Effective initiatives often provide continued support to help youth stay positively connected in society—to the workforce, education or otherwise. Such support can also help youth move up the ladder to better jobs and further education.

Public policy is also recognizing the need for extended support. The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires a year of follow-up services and Youth Opportunity Grants (a competitive grant program of the WIA) call for two years of follow-up services.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Involving and supporting alumni
- Tracking and providing follow-up services for at least one year

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

Evidence of Success (Category 5)

Effective initiatives collect appropriate and credible data that enable them to document their operational effectiveness and their ability to achieve desired outcomes.

Increasingly, funders, both governmental and philanthropic, along with the general public, are concerned about "bottom line" issues: who is served, what happens to them, does the program have the impact intended. They want to know if their investment in social programs makes a real difference. Therefore, youth initiatives, like other social programs, must show evidence that their efforts are having the desired effect.

Effective initiatives have numerous approaches and techniques available to help determine effectiveness and to use to enhance offerings. One useful framework places "measures" and "data" into three broad, increasingly sophisticated categories: (1) descriptive, (2) outcome and (3) comparative. The criteria in Evidence of Success address these three areas. The things a program measures and the data it collects should reflect the mission and goals it sets out to achieve, not simply funding requirements.

A further element of effective initiatives is that they communicate their statistical and programmatic information in a manner so that people outside the agency understand the impact of the initiative on (and its value to) the participants and the community.

Effective initatives also use data for continuous improvement. For simplicity, this PEPNet category covers the collection and organization of different kinds of data and the documentation of success while Category 2 Organization and Management (specifically OM 4, continuous improvement, p. 22) covers the use of this data for management decision making and program improvement.

Visit PEPNet's Index to Effective Practices to find out about:

- Collecting data
- Using community resources to obtain an outside assessment

www.nyec.org/pepnet/practices.htm

ES1 Descriptive Data: The initiative collects information on its current operations, services and participants.

Descriptive data provide information describing the services offered by the initiative to its participants. Almost every initiative uses descriptive measures to compile data, usually as part of its management information system (MIS). The most effective MIS systems are designed to produce information that the initiative can use in planning. They help initiatives determine with precision: Whom are we serving? What kinds of services are we providing, and how efficiently?

ES2 Outcome Data: The initiative establishes measurable objectives that reflect its goals and collects and communicates solid information about the results of its activities.

Outcome measures and data concentrate on a single issue: What tangible results did the initiative achieve? The kinds of results youth initiatives most often measure are:

- Educational and competency outcomes. These relate to the progress and achievement a young person makes in developing academic, life or job-related skills.
- Employment outcomes. These include job placements, earnings, retention on the job, etc.
- Connective outcomes. These include connections to additional education, another youth initiative or military service, as well as information about outcome costs such as cost per placement or per high school completion.
- Initiative-specific outcomes. These reflect the specialized aims an initiative may have, such as reductions in teen parenting or involvement with the justice system.
- Youth and stakeholder satisfaction. This is a means of measuring the extent to which the initiative is meeting stakeholder needs.
- **Youth development outcomes. Often more** difficult to measure, these include critical-thinking, self-efficacy, resourcefulness, team work.

ES3 Comparative Measures: The initiative seeks sources of comparative information and data.

Comparative indicators make it possible for an initiative to measure its impacts or benefits against some external standard. Such information takes documentation beyond the findings of outcome measures: for example, from whether youth in the initiative get jobs to whether they do better than they would have without the initiative or better than youth in a comparable initiative.

There are several ways to make such comparisons. One is to compare the results for youth in the initiative with known or published data for similar populations. Published demographic data, earlier cohorts of program participants, or data from school or JTPA/WIA, might be used to compare outcomes for youth in an initiative with those of a similar out-of-school population.

It is also possible to bring in an outside evaluator, with background and knowledge of the program area. Funders will sometimes provide support for such a study if they are persuaded that the findings will be independent and credible. There are also relatively inexpensive ways to conduct evaluations, such as partnering with a local college or inviting a research firm to study the initiative. And utilizing PEPNet, while not scientific, provides a kind of comparative measure at no cost. Engaging in the PEPNet Self Assessment enables an initiative to document successes and plan improvements in relation to effective practice criteria. PEPNet Applicants receive detailed comments from an outside panel of reviewers who consider initiatives against PEPNet criteria.

PEPNet

Self-Assessment

2

Fresh Start, a program of the Living Classrooms Foundation, has helped many young people change their lives.

Youth Development
Evidence of Success
Workforce Development
Quality Management
PEPNet

Promising and Effective Practices Network

Using the PEPNet Self Assessment

The Self Assessment is a detailed tool you can use to take a closer look at your initative, document successes and plan improvements. It is a tool that can be used in different ways—you may adapt it to your needs and make it work for you.

The PEPNet Self Assessment is key in the process of continuous improvement. Undertaking the Self Assessment will require a concerted effort over a period of time and the commitment of staff at all levels of the initiative. However, that investment has many potential benefits.

- It will give you an opportunity to compare your program and practices against reliable criteria.
- It can engage staff, leadership, youth and stakeholders in an examination of the impact of your initiative.
- It can help develop staff, enhance teamwork, document success, identify areas needing strengthening and plan improvements.
- It prepares you to gain the national designation of PEPNet Builder (p. 47).

A well planned Self Assessment will inform enhancements to your initiative, even though you are already making a difference for young people—such is the nature of continuous improvement.

Self Assessment Materials

- Self Assessment Exercise - a quick way to rate the various areas of your program; available at www.nyec.org/pepnet, on the Improvement Process page or by fax request to (202)659-0399.
- PEPNet Self Assessment - a diagnostic tool based on the PEPNet Criteria (pp. 17-32)
- Self Assessment Matrix - a means to capture information as you assess your program (pp. 42-46).
- PEPNet Builder Certification Form - submit this after conducting the Self Assessment to achieve the first milestone of the PEPNet Improvement Process (p. 47).

First Steps

Begin by submitting the PEPNet Registration Form (p. *i*). Then go to our website (www.nyec.org/pepnet) and download the Self Assessment Exercise. Have staff members complete the exercise and then meet together to decide how to proceed with the Self Assessment itself. Before the meeting, read the PEPNet Criteria section (pp. 17-32) and become familiar with the PEPNet Knowledge Base (p. 2).

Items to Consider

Is Management Committed?

- Will management take responsibility for the Self Assessment process?
- Will staff get the time and resources necessary to participate?
- Will there be access to necessary data and information?
- Will management be open to the feedback generated by the Self Assessment?
- Will the resulting action plans be implemented?

Is Everyone On Board?

- Are all levels of the initiative represented on the team(s) undertaking the Self Assessment (including groups such as board members, funders, youth, staff, community partners)?
- Why do we want to conduct a Self Assessment?
- Is there a consensus around that purpose?
- Does everyone share the same expectations about what is to be done with the results?

What Else Do We Need to Consider?

- If ours is a multi-site or multi-program agency, should we conduct a Self Assessment for the entire organization or just certain sites or youth initiatives?
- Do we want to address all five categories?
- What kind of schedule best fits our initiative—short and intense or spread out over a defined period of time?
- How many assessment groups/teams do we need and what are their responsibilties? What resources do they each need?
- What information do we need? How do we collect it?
- How will we involve the participants?
- How will we involve our employer partners?
- How will we use the results?

How Will We Organize It?

Any way that works for you. Some approaches initiatives have used include:

- making it the subject of a staff retreat;
- identifying certain areas to investigate; and
- breaking into teams to address different questions and then bringing it back to the whole.

PEPNet Self Assessment Questions

downloadable in Word and WordPerfect at www.nyec.org/pepnet

Purpose and Activities (Category 1)

Effective initiatives have clear and well-understood aims and a coherent, well-organized set of components and activities to attain them.

PA1 Mission: The initiative presents a clear and consistent mission.

- What purpose is this initiative intended to accomplish, and why?
- Does your current mission statement accurately reflect the purpose of the initiative, who is served, the services offered and the outcomes expected?
- Does the mission reflect new or changing priorities?
- Can staff, board and youth accurately describe the initiative's mission?
- Is there an inclusive process for developing and periodically revisiting the mission and for communicating it to all stakeholders, including youth?

PA2 Target Youth: There is a logical and visible relationship between the initiative's mission, activities and the youth it serves.

- Who are your target youth?
- How does serving youth with this set of characteristics relate to the purpose of the initiative?
- How do you identify and recruit participants?

PA3 Activities: The initiative's mission shapes its structure and offerings.

- How do your structure and your activities support and accomplish your mission?
- How do all aspects of the initiative form a coherent strategy?

Organization and Management (Category 2)

Effective initiatives are well managed, work in collaboration with others and are commited to continuous improvement

OM1 Leadership: The initiative maintains a strong, engaged, continuous and competent leadership.

- How is senior staff, as well as the board or advisory committee, involved in setting direction; maintaining a continuous improvement environment; and ensuring the highest standards of performance?
- Is there stable leadership? Examine the turnover rate of senior leadership.
- How does the organization maintain continuous effectiveness when leadership changes?
- How does the organization's leadership and staffing structure support meeting the initiative's purpose?
- How does the leadership generate an atmopshere conducive to youth development?
- How do the organization's leaders build community and other support?
- How do leaders interact with staff and encourage respect and excellence?

OM2 Staff Development: The initiative incorporates staff development as a management strategy.

- How do the initiative's goals influence the criteria used for hiring, evaluating and rewarding staff?
- What are the qualifications for key staff positions? How do these criteria ensure a commitment to positive youth development?

- How does the initiative invest in staff development and training? For which staff? Do you have a staff development plan? What is it and how does it relate to your mission?
- Is there staff continuity? What is your staff turnover rate? How does it compare with other organizations?
- How do you measure staff satisfaction? What were your most recent results?
- How is the staff involved in the design and improvement of the initiative?
- How does the initiative foster staff awareness of diverse groups (including but not limited to: race, gender, ethnicity, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability)?
- How does the initiative prepare staff to talk with youth about racism and discrimination? How does the initiative promote ways for staff and leadership to explore and address institutional racism and discrimination in your organization and with community partners (i.e., employers, higher education, etc.)?

OM3 Collaboration: The initiative leverages resources through collaboration.

- What collaborative ties has your initiative developed and what purpose does each serve?
- How does the initiative relate to the larger community's goals and visions?
- How do your collaborations relate to the initiative's mission and goals?
- What additional collaborations might support your goals?

OM4 Continuous Improvement: The initiative is committed to a continuous improvement strategy.

- Examine your management practices. Which contribute to your effectiveness and why?
- How are your efforts for on-going improvement structured and implemented?
- How does your initiative use information and data (for collection of data see Evidence of Success below) to plan, manage and improve?
- How are data shared among staff?
- How are young people involved and how does their feedback inform improvement?
- Who are your other stakeholders (employers, staff, labor unions, community leaders, others)? How do you identify them and how do you involve them? What structures are in place to get their feedback and to communicate back to them?

OM5 Funding: The initiative attracts stable and diverse funding.

- How do you ensure that funding levels are sustained?
- What different sources of financial and non-financial support do you utilize?
- What efforts do you make to expand and increase support?
- How do you leverage resources?
- How do you communicate with funders to keep them apprized and to understand their goals and needs?

Youth Development (Category 3)

Effective initiatives consciously rely on youth development principles to identify activities and shape the program environment, structure and operations.

YD1 Youth/Adult Relationships: The initiative nurtures sustained relationships between youth and caring, knowledgeable adults.

- What fraction of youths' time is spent in large groups with a single leader or teacher? In small groups? In one-on-one interaction with adults? Without direct supervision?
- How does the initiative foster positive and sustained relationships, both formal and informal, between youth and adults (staff, community members, at the worksite, other)?

- How are these youth/adult relationships consciously used to promote youths' growth and development?
- How are adults chosen, trained and supported to work effectively and compassionately with young people? How do you ensure they understand and practice positive youth development?
- How long do the youth/adult relationships last? Are they sustained after formal program participation?

YD2 Building Youths' Responsibility and Leadership Skills: The initiative engages youth in their development and sets high expectations for them.

- How does the initiative promote the highest expectations for all youth?
- How does the initiative provide a consistent structure for participants?
- Are youth provided with opportunities to exercise responsibility, assume leadership roles and make valued contributions? How?
- How does the program provide a safe and engaging environment, a place participants want to be?
- How does the initiative positively engage youth in their community? Are youth provided opportunities to perform community service?

YD3 Individual Focus and Age/Stage Appropriate Outlook: The initiative tailors the program experience for each youth and also provides age and/or stage appropriate services for its participants.

- How does the initiative determine the individual needs, assets and goals of each youth and ensure that they are addressed?
- How does the initiative tailor its activities to different ages and/or stages of maturity of its participants?

YD4 Family and Peer Support: The initiative encourages positive relationships with family and peers.

- How does the initiative involve or serve families (and/or others important in the youths' lives outside the program)?
- How does the initiative promote positive peer and peer group relations to support program attachment and youth achievement and success?

YD5 Supportive Services and Opportunities: The initiative provides youth with supportive services and opportunities beyond education and training.

- What services and opportunities are important and/or beneficial to your participants? (Some examples could be mental/physical health care, child care, transportation, recreational and cultural activities)
- How do you identify these?
- How do you provide or make these accessible?
- Are there services and opportunities missing from your network? How could you add them?

YD6 Building Sense of Self and of Group: The initiative helps youth develop a sense of group membership while fostering a sense of identity and self.

- How does the initiative encourage personal development (such as self-awareness and esteem, life skills development, other)?
- How is the initiative sensitive to the diversity (racial, ethnic, gender, socio-economic, religious, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, other) of its participants? How does it promote tolerance?
- How does the initiative promote cultural awareness and pride?
- How does the initiative help youth understand the impact of covert and overt racism and other forms of discrimination? How does it help youth navigate and combat racism and discrimination in the community, educational institutions, workplace, etc.?

Workforce Development (Category 4)

Effective initiatives emphasize the development of knowledge and competencies that lead to careers and self-sufficiency and stress the connection between learning and work.

WD1 Career Awareness, Planning and Readiness: The initiative nurtures career awareness and embeds career planning and readiness throughout the program.

- What opportunities does the initiative provide to increase young people's knowledge of and access to a range of jobs and education?
- How does the initiative help young people gain skills and background necessary to make good education and career decisions?
- How does the initiative help prepare young people to enter the workplace?

WD2 Employer Engagement: The initiative ensures that employers are actively engaged in the initiative.

- What resources and expertise do employers contribute to your workforce development efforts?
- How does the initiative learn what employers need? Do the competencies gained by young people in the initiative meet the requirements of employers?
- Are there community-wide, employer-sponsored workforce development initiatives in your area? If so, do you work with them? Do you connect with labor organizations and/or apprenticeship programs?

WD3 Work and Learning Connection: The initiative relates academic learning to real-life work issues and situations, stresses active learning, and engages youth in challenging academic preparation.

- Does the initiative provide challenging academic preparation for youth to meet high standards for entry into careers and/or further education? What, if any, other organizations (public or private entities, higher education, labor unions, etc.) do you link with to provide such preparation?
- What types of challenging work-based and/or experiential learning opportunities do you offer?
- What do you do to emphasize the connection between work and learning?

WD4 Competencies Emphasis: The initiative documents and communicates competencies gained by young people.

- Does the initiative incorporate competencies based on widely accepted standards, such as SCANS competencies? Do you use any widely accepted system for occupation-specific competencies?
- How does the initiative measure and document competency attainments of youth?
- How does the initiative help youth understand and communicate the competencies they have gained?

WD5 Extended Follow-up: The initiative provides extended services and support.

- In what ways does the initiative follow up on participants to track their progress? For how long? Is this adequate?
- In what ways do you provide support activities or continued contact for youth who have finished the formal part of your program?

Evidence of Success (Category 5)

Effective initiatives collect appropriate and credible data that enable them to document their operational effectiveness and their ability to achieve desired outcomes.

ES1 Descriptive Data: The initiative collects information on its current operations, services and participants.

- What day-to-day information does the organization need to manage its operations?
- How does your organization get this information now? How is that data organized?
- What information do outside audiences, including funders, require?
- What additional information would help the initiative understand its efforts better and help in decision making?

ES2 Outcome Data: The initiative establishes measurable objectives that reflect its goals and collects and communicates solid information about the results of its activities.

- What outcomes are you currently measuring? Why have you chosen to measure these outcomes? How do they relate to your mission and goals?
- Do you collect information from stakeholders? How?
- Are you now producing measures that correspond to each of the outcomes you are interested in? Why do you use the measures you do?
- Are there objectives or outcomes which seem important but hard to measure?
- Do you measure youth development outcomes?
- What program outcomes are reported? To whom?
- How are participants better off as a result of your program? Write down and discuss the results (numbers) for your most recent program year in each outcome area. Prepare a chart similar to the chart on p. 37 (using your own appropriate outcomes) so that your impacts are understandable to those inside and outside your agency.

ES3 Comparative Measures: The initiative seeks sources of comparative information and data.

- How might the outcomes from this initiative compare with other interventions?
- Are there outside standards or benchmarks you can apply in gauging the impacts of your program?
- What available sources of information would permit the initiative to make useful comparisons of your results with similar youth programs?
- Have you had internal or external evaluation(s)?
- What are some resources you could tap into—funding, community resources, others—to conduct evaluation and/or utilize comparative information?

PEPNet Builder

Remember: Upon completing the Self Assessment, submit the PEPNet Builder Certification Form (p. 47).

ES2: Sample Program Outcomes Chart

The following is a sample demonstrating how one program may complete an outcomes chart. Please note this is only an example that may be helpful to you as you think about how to demonstrate measurable outcomes. The outcomes, measures and numbers you list will be particular to your initiative and should relate to the mission, purpose, and activities of your initiative. Make sure outcomes, measures and numbers you list are clearly understandable to someone who does not know your program.

These do not represent expected outcomes or milestones.

Outcome Measures for Program Period (fill in: 01/01/01- 06/01/01)				
Number of Participants served During this Period: 222				**Optional Comments**
Outcomes	**Planned**	**Actual**	**How Measured**	
Completion of program	85%	90%	Entrance and graduation dates entered into spreadsheet tracking mechanism	
Employed upon program completion	75%	60%	120 of 200 program completers reported employment (100 private sector, 11 government, 9 non-profit) upon completion	45% full time, 30% part time (25% of that in comb. with ed)
Enrolled in post secondary training or education at exit	40% of those leaving w/ a diploma	40%	80 of 200 program completers enrolled in post secondary programs	25% part time in combination w/ employment
High school diploma	55% of those entering w/out diploma	50%	HS Diploma granted	125 did not have GED or diploma on entrance. 63 attained diploma
Leadership positions	25%	20%	30 of 150 "Teen Peers" participants advanced to leadership and training positions	
Retention in positive activity (ed/training and/ or job) after one year.	80%	70%	Contact from students (calls, drop-bys) and calls to those not contacting us. 70 of 100 program completers (01/01/ 99-06/01/99).	Could not reach 10 youth
Rehabilitate single-family dwellings	15 homes	10 homes	Ten homes have been rehabilitated and are on the market or occupied.	Additional 9 currently under construction.
Other(s)			***Remember, depending on your initiative you will likely have different outcomes than those listed in this sample.***	

Self Assessment Matrix

This is a tool to help you capture information as you work through the PEPNet Self Assessment questions. This matrix is an internal document that will assist your initiative in completing the Self Assessment—no one outside your organization needs to see your results. We suggest using this matrix as a tool for your benefit—cut and paste, reprint and reorganize the matrix to make it most useful to your specific needs (it is also available electronically on the Improvement Process page at www.nyec.org/pepnet).

This tool contains a chart for each of the five PEPNet categories, with each chart containing the PEPNet criteria for that category. There is space to note 1) a score of 1-4 if you decide you want to rate your effectiveness in each criterion, 2) evidence of strengths and weaknesses identified for each criterion and 3) steps you plan to take for continuous improvement regarding that criterion. This matrix is not intended to stand alone; rather it is a companion tool to help organize your thoughts and capture your results as you complete the Self Assessment. This tool will provide much of the information requested on the Builder Certification Form. It will also provide information you can draw from when completing a PEPNet Application.

Alternately, if you would like to start with a quick assessment to begin thinking about your program's strengths and weaknesses, PEPNet has devised a 30-minute Self Assessment Exercise available to download at www.nyec.org/pepnet/reports.

Category 1: Purpose and Activities

Criteria	Rating (1-4)	Evidence of Strengths	Evidence of Weaknesses	Planned or proposed improvements
PA1 Presents a clear and consistent mission				
PA2 Logical and visible relationship between the initiative's mission, activities and the youth it serves				
PA3 Mission shapes structure and offerings				

Category 2: Organization and Management

Criteria	Rating (1-4)	Evidence of Strengths	Evidence of Weaknesses	Planned or proposed improvements
OM1 Maintains a strong, engaged, continuous and competent leadership				
OM2 Incorporates staff development as a management strategy				
OM3 Leverages resources through collaboration				
OM4 Is committed to a continuous improvement strategy				
OM5 Attracts stable and diverse funding				

Category 3: Youth Development

Criteria	Rating (1-4)	Evidence of Strengths	Evidence of Weaknesses	Planned or proposed improvements
YD1 Nurtures sustained relationships between youth and caring, knowledgeable adults				
YD2 Engages youth in their development and sets high expectations for them				
YD3 Tailors program experience for each youth and also provides age and/ or stage appropriate services for its participants				
YD4 Encourages positive relationships with family and peers				
YD5 Provides youth with supportive services and opportunities beyond education and training				
YD6 Helps youth develop a sense of group membership while fostering a sense of identity and self				

Category 4: Workforce Development

Criteria	Rating (1-4)	Evidence of Strengths	Evidence of Weaknesses	Planned or proposed improvements
WD1 Nurtures career awareness and embeds career planning and readiness throughout the program				
WD2 Ensures that employers are actively engaged in the initiative				
WD3 Relates academic learning to real-life work issues and situations; stresses active learning; engages youth in challenging academic preparation				
WD4 Documents and communicates competencies gained by young people				
WD5 Provides extended services and support				

Category 5: Evidence of Success

Criteria	Rating (1-4)	Evidence of Strengths	Evidence of Weaknesses	Planned or proposed improvements
ES1 Collects information on current operations, services and participants				
ES2 Establishes measurable objectives that reflect goals and collects and communicates solid information about the results of its activities				
ES3 Seeks sources of comparative information and data				

Thanks to Terry Grobe and the Commonwealth Corporation's Massachusetts Best Practices Network (a state network modeled after PEPNet); the format for this document was drawn from their Self Assessment Matrix.

PEPNet Builder Certification Form

PEPNet Builders are youth employment/development programs that have completed the PEPNet Self Assessment as part of their commitment to continuous improvement.

Please place this form on top of your submission.

Name of Initiative _____

Name of Legal Entity responsible for Initiative, if different[1]

_____

Address _____

_____

City, State/Province, Zip _____

Contact Person and Title _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Fax _____ Web site (if applicable) _____

Our program has completed its PEPNet Self Assessment and wishes to be designated a PEPNet Builder as we engage in continuous improvement. I certify that the information provided in this certification is true and available for public dissemination.

Signed _____ Date _____

Please respond to the following five questions and return two copies of your submission to NYEC. Your answers will certify that you undertook Self Assessment and formulated continuous improvement plan(s) as a result. NYEC staff will review your response within one month of receipt; if complete, you will receive PEPNet Builder designation.

National Youth Employment Coalition
1836 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036

[1] Note: if your organization houses several programs you may apply for Builder status for the entire organization or for the programs separately – your choice. However, to receive Builder status for any given entity, that entity must have undertaken the PEPNet Self Assessment.

1. *Process and format.* Describe how you implemented the PEPNet Self Assessment in your program. Be sure to include who participated (staff, youth, board, other stakeholders) and how, and how long the process took.

2. *Findings.* Describe 2-3 major findings (improvement areas and/or strengths) that resulted from the PEPNet Self Assessment.

3. *Plans.* How do you plan to use the results of the PEPNet Self Assessment for continuous improvement? Which of the five PEPNet categories will you be concentrating on? How do you plan to communicate your Self Assessment results to stakeholders and others?

4. Please attach a one paragraph description of your initiative.

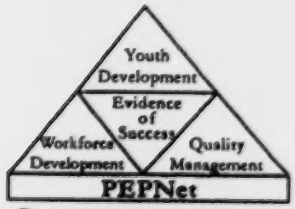
5. Appendix: *[NYEC and PEPNet are engaged in continuous improvement. We ask you, as a stakeholder, for input regarding the Self Assessment procedure and materials. This response will have no bearing on your Builder designation.]* How was the PEPNet Self Assessment (and other PEPNet materials, if you used them) helpful to you? How could it be improved?

PEPNet

Recognition

At the Delaware Valley Job Corps Center, youth learn ingredients that make successful careers.

Parents and youth learn about teambuilding at the Genesee County Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program.



Promising and Effective Practices Network

Notice of Intent to Apply

4

The PEPNet Application is available on the PEPNet website at www.nyec.org/pepnet or by fax request at (202) 659-0399.

_____ ***(Required.)*** We have used the Pre-Application Exercise[1] and have decided to submit a PEPNet Application for Recognition in 2002 (due April 18, 2002).

_____ ***(Optional.)*** We wish to take advantage of the "buddy" option and receive one "advice" phone call and someone to read and comment on our application before we submit it. We understand that NYEC can only guarantee that we will receive a buddy if we submit this form by Jan. 15, 2002; later requests may not be matched.[2]

Name of Legal Entity Responsible for Initiative _____

Name of Initiative _____

Address _____

City, State/Province, Zip _____

Contact Name and Title _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Return this form to NYEC no later than March 25 in order to apply in 2002.

Fax: (202) 659-0399
Email: pm@nyec.org

National Youth Employment Coalition
1836 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036

[1] *The Pre-Application Exercise, an internal document to gauge your readiness to submit a PEPNet Application, is available at www.nyec.org/pepnet on the Improvement Process page or by fax request (202) 659-0399. All PEPNet Builders will receive this document from NYEC after receiving Builder designation.*

[2] *Thanks to Terry Grobe and the Commonwealth Corporation's Massachusetts Best Practices Network for providing the inspiration for this new feature of PEPNet.*

Process for Applying for Recognition

Each spring, NYEC invites programs to apply for national recognition. All applicants receive detailed comments from a panel of volunteer peer reviewers. The highest level of PEPNet recognition is the prestigious PEPNet Award, for applicants illustrating effectiveness across all five PEPNet Criteria categories. Applicants who demonstrate effectiveness in Purpose and Activities plus two other categories may receive the designation of PEPNet Promising Program.

Eligibility

- Any initiative involved in youth employment and youth development serving young people ages 14-25 is eligible to apply for recognition. However, NYEC urges untested programs to wait until they have a track record and evidence of success before applying.

- Organizations with multiple initiatives may submit PEPNet applications for one or more initiative.

- Applicants chosen for public recognition by PEPNet must be willing to serve as an information source on effective practice. This may include hosting visits, participating in workshops, answering phone inquiries and providing additional written materials.

Suggested Timetable

- ✔ **Fall** - Conduct PEPNet Self Assessment (although not required, this is highly recommended) and use information in your Self Assessment Matrix (pp. 42-46) in writing your application.
- ✔ Complete the Pre-Application Exercise to gauge your readiness to submit a PEPNet Application.*
- ✔ Submit *Notice of Intent to Apply* ASAP and no later than March 25, 2002.
- ✔ **January - mid-February** - Prepare Application.**
- ✔ **February** - Give Application to outside reader for review (recommended).***
- ✔ **March - April** - Receive comments back from reader and revise the Application.
- ✔ **April 18, 2002** - Submit Application by deadline.
- ✔ **August** - Announcement of PEPNet Awards.
- ✔ Receive feedback from Peer Review Panel
- ✔ **September** - PEPNet Awards Ceremony in Washington, DC.

* The Pre-Application Exercise is available at www.nyec.org/pepnet on the Improvement Process page or by fax request (202) 659-0399. All PEPNet Builders receive this document from NYEC after attaining Builder designation.

** The PEPNet Application for Recognition will be available in November and can be downloaded from the Improvement Process page of our website (www.nyec.org/pepnet) or requested by fax at (202) 659-0399.

*** Through its "buddy" option, NYEC will put you in touch with a PEPNet reviewer or Awardee who has participated in the review process. This buddy will provide one "advice" phone call and someone to read and comment on your application (with a 2-week turnaround period). Indicate your interest in this option on the *Notice of Intent to Apply* and submit that form to NYEC by January 15 if you wish to take advantage of this option. If you do not use the buddy option, we still strongly encourage you to have an outside reader review your Application (see p. 59 for details).

Demonstrating Evidence of Effectiveness

The PEPNet Application for Recognition is a series of questions pertaining to the PEPNet Critieria. ***The complete PEPNet Application is available for downloading in Word and WordPerfect from www.nyec.org/pepnet. Also available by fax request (202-659-0399).***

Initiatives must demonstrate evidence of effectiveness in **all five** PEPNet categories to receive the PEPNet Award. However, we recognize that some programs are doing more in some specific criteria areas than in others. Reviewers look at the whole program, its cohesion and its impact. Initiatives that demonstrate evidence of effectiveness in Purpose and Activities plus two other PEPNet categories will be considered for Promising Program status.

The reviewers are looking for *evidence of effectiveness* in each category. This means you need to provide specific examples of what your program does. Evidence is measurable or observable (tools, numbers, activities, processes) and constitutes "proof" that the initiative is meeting the criterion. Look at these specific examples provided by 2001 PEPNet Awardees in segments from their applications:

Purpose and Activities

PA2: *The referred young adults come to us voluntarily, talk to our recruiter during a structured program orientation session...and decide if the LACC is where they want to be. They complete an application at the end of the orientation session. Interviews are scheduled and positions filled every two months. The selection process is primarily based on a young person's motivation to make a positive change in his/her life. A group of 30 young people who can demonstrate a willingness to work hard and learn the practical environmental community improvement skills we can offer them is chosen to participate in a detailed orientation and residential training week in the natural environment. Those not selected to participate in the program are encouraged to re-apply in two months or are referred to other schools or youth development agencies.*

- Los Angeles Conservation Corps Young Adult Services Division, Los Angeles, CA

PA1: *In addition to teaching personal skills and exposing young people to work and learning opportunities, we also attempt to give our Corpsmembers the tools they need to tackle larger societal issues. The Youth Corps' emphasis on Corpsmember leadership, problem-driven community service projects and civic involvement is consistent with The Work Group's commitment to constructive social change. In a recent year, one cycle of Corpsmembers tackled the issue of homelessness by convening a mock city council meeting where they presented several recommendations addressing homelessness to a number of community leaders.*

- The Work Group's Youth Corps Program, Pennsauken, NY

Organization and Management

OM4: *Continuous improvement is part of the structure of our program. Youth fill out evaluation forms after Mental Toughness and after major events such as Hitting the Wall Retreat. After lessons, staff ask youth to participate in a* plus/delta *where youth give feedback on what they found useful and what can be improved. Staff also ask youth for honest opinions about the lesson. All staff have written curriculum and incorporate the feedback into future classes. Staff meet with supervisors bi-weekly to discuss any issues or problems. The youth leadership body meets weekly with management staff to discuss program changes. Staff may discuss any needed changes or issues at monhly staff development days. There is also an annual staff retreat and an annual youth retreat. We also have committees broken down by section (construction, education, leadership) in order for staff and youth to have time to focus on improving particular areas.*

- YouthBuild McLean County, Bloomington, IL

OM2: *At the start of each year, a monthly inservice plan is developed based on staff interests and program needs. Staff is also provided with opportunities to attend workshops, continuing education programs and advanced degree programs. Flexibility in individual staff schedules as well as tuition reimbursement is provided as incentive for these opportunities... Staff often move to positions of increased responsibility, as well as salary and title acknowledgement as they develop new skills.*

- Career Development Program, Bay Cove Academy, Brookline, MA

Youth Development

YD2: *Fresh Start is structured to teach responsibility for oneself and one's actions. The initiative operates on a normal business schedule and youth are expected to be punctual and attend regularly. Beginning in 1998, a new and very successful attendance policy was*

instituted as a result of poor attendance and tardiness in previous years. The new policy allows students to earn personal days, much like the workplace. Since the institution of this policy, the Fresh Start attendance rate has risen to over 90 percent.
- Fresh Start, Living Classrooms Foundation, Baltimore, MD

YD2: *A key standard in this initiative is a phased transfer of responsibility and authority to youth from adult staff. A good example where this has occurred is in the Youth Appeals Board. Youth, rather than adult staff, now conduct a hearing when a peer files a grievance claiming that staff improperly changed their status to a lower level for an infraction of the student rules of conduct. All decisions are final from the appeals board, indicating the empowerment of youth in this area of program management.*
- Gulf Coast Trades Center, New Waverly, TX

Workforce Development

WD3: *CS² teams have taken leadership roles in, and secured funding for, whole-school restructuring efforts that promote high academic achievement as well as youth development and career development; as examples: a) in the last two years, in Barnstable and Chicopee, and at the O'Bryant High School in Boston, CS³ organized and facilitated substantial work at developing career pathways and academies; b) Brockton, Boston, Chicopee, and New Bedford all received funding and participated in the Massachusetts Department of Education Career Majors Initiative, an effort to help high schools develop career-related pathways or majors and infuse career-related examples into existing curriculum...*
- Communities and Schools for Career Success, Commonwealth Corporation, Northampton, MA

WD5: *We do a two-year follow-up for our employment [program] graduates. This follow-up also includes field visits, events to reunite past graduates, replacement services and continued referral services for additional assistance. Although follow-up is a contractual obligation for only two years, the Isaacs Center has and always will continue to assist any person who walks in the door.*
- Youth Leadership and Employment Program, Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center, New York, NY

Evidence of Success

ES1: *For qualitative data, we created a system similar to a medical form. Each member has a file divided into six sections. The first is enrollment data, such as selective service enrollment, TABE scores, and proof of age and address. The second section includes goal planning documentation, any case notes and other goal-related information. The third section includes information pertaining to pre-placement activities, attendance sheets, progress reports, etc. The fourth section is comprised of educational skills attainments, pretests, internship data forms, individualized training account and voluneer work data forms, and performance reviews. The fifth section is dedicated to employment and long-term training data including job placement reports, referrals to job developers, progress reports, etc. Section six houses information regarding members' youth development, cultural and recreational activities. Staff are responsible for maintaining their appropriate section of the file, but overall accountability falls on the case managers.*
- FEGS/Youth Opportunity Center, Bronx, NY

ES3: *Transition services for youth with disabilities are fairly new. Longitudinal studies of the past ten years of services have identified best practices and identified areas of continued study. We have internally compared our program to P.D. Kohler's best practices in* Taxonomy for Transition Programming: Linking Research and Practice *and found many similarities to the design of our program. After also looking at programs recognized by the Transition Alliance we felt we were in the same category.*
- Job Link Program, Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP), Cleveland, OH

While a strong application will have evidence that is measurable or observable, weak applications have abstract terms, general language, and "boilerplate" responses too generic to be useful to PEPNet Reviewers.

Weak Language	Stronger Language *(Note that these are partial responses, meant only for comparison. These are not meant to be examples of complete responses for the Criteria listed.)*	Why is it Stronger? *(Listed below are questions that Reviewers may have had based on the weak responses that were answered in the stronger responses.)*
PA3: The Career Initiative provides opportunities for OTYP youth to engage in career training as mandated by OTSD. This initiative allows students registered at seven OTSD high schools to access services through this component of OTYP in the classroom, the workplace, and individually. 54% of all eligible OTSD students participated in the initiative's career development opportunities during the 00-01 academic year.	PA3: Our Town School District (OTSD) runs OTYP (Our Town Youth Program) in seven of the city's nine urban high schools. All youth (6,800) at these seven high schools are eligible for OTYP's Career Initiative. The Career Initiative offers career development classes (6 classes per school were attended by 37% of eligible students in the 00-01 year); after-school internships (17% of eligible students participated); and study-hour career mentoring (49% of eligible students participated).	PA3: What do the acronyms OTSD and OTYP stand for? Is the Career Initiative offered to all OTSD students? How many youth are eligible? How many youth take advantage of the Initiative? What are the specific types of offerings in the Initiative?
OM2: We provide numerous opportunities for staff development throughout the school year. These opportunities allow staff to improve their knowledge and experience around key elements of youth development. Twelve staff members attended trainings during the past academic year.	OM2: Once each quarter, each staff person is encouraged to take ½ day to attend staff development sessions, made available by the District. This academic year, these opportunities allowed staff to learn about: mentoring (4 staff attended), gangs (7 staff), high stakes testing (2 staff), and teen pregnancy (9 staff).	OM2: How often are staff offered professional development opportunities? How long do these trainings last? How many staff have taken advantage of these trainings? What specific topics have been covered this year?
YD2: Our Youth Leadership Council allows members to take an active role in decision making throughout the organization. Youth leaders, selected to serve on the YLC for one-year terms, have made valuable contributions to the daily functioning of the organization. These Youth Leaders are often invited to attend Board Meetings and are integral to the organizational decision making process.	YD2: Each cycle, 18 youth are elected by their peers to serve a one-year term on the Youth Leadership Council, which meets monthly. This year, youth leaders have developed a proposal to change the morning schedule to include 30 more minutes each week of one-on-one counseling. They have also been instrumental in leveraging the municipality for a new bus stop in front of the Training Center. Three youth attended Board Meetings this year to voice the members' opinions on a new attendance policy.	YD2: How many youth are on the YLC? How are youth selected for the YLC? How often does the YLC meet? What specific actions has the YLC taken? How, specifically, have youth contributed to the "organizational decision making process"?

WD3: Each student is provided the opportunity to acquire hands on experience through the internship program. This includes a 6-week paid work based learning opportunity at various local employers throughout the metropolitan area. Each youth participant is paid $7.85/hour.	WD3: Each student is provided the opportunity to acquire hands on experience through the internship program. This year, 62% of all students (75 students) took advantage of a 6-week paid full-time internship as office assistants, maintenance assistants, and cashiers. 53 employers sponsored internships. The program paid each participant $7.85/hour.	WD3: How many students take advantage of this option? Is this part-time or full-time employment? What types of jobs have youth been placed in? How many local employers have participated? Who pays the hourly wage?

Some Additional Tips[1]

Drawing from reviewer suggestions, here are some additional tips that can help as you prepare your application:

- ***Do not make assumptions.*** Write the application to an audience that does not know your acronyms, program standards, history or activities. Reviewers opt out of reading applications with which they believe they could have a conflict of interest, so the reviewers reading your application will not be familiar with your initiative.

- ***Take the time needed to do the job.*** This is not something you can leave until the last minute and do well.

- ***Use the PEPNet '01 Reviewer Manual.*** Read the PEPNet 2001 Reviewer Manual to inform your preparation of your application. The Manual may change slightly in 2002, but most of it will remain the same. Reading this manual will ensure that you know what reviewers will be asked to look for as they assess applications – there are no secrets to this process. You will want to particularly focus on Part III, the Reviewer Guidelines for application content, as this directs reviewers on assessing how your application meets the PEPNet criteria. The Manual is available on the Improvement Process section of the PEPNet web site, www.nyec.org/pepnet. Make sure you download the regular manual.

- ***Have someone outside the agency read the application.*** Remember, reviewers will not know your program. Several PEPNet Awardees have found it helpful to have someone outside the initiative read the application so that questions a "stranger" might have can be identified and answered. If you utilize an outside reader, we suggest you ask that person to review your draft application for content, organization and clarity, asking questions such as: Will reviewers be able to understand this easily? Does it provide evidence of all the PEPNet criteria for someone who does not know this program? Does it read well and make sense as a whole?

- ***Use your allocated space wisely.*** Attaching flyers and pictures is nice, but does not substitute for hard facts and specific evidence of how you are meeting the PEPNet criteria.

- ***Provide data and statistics that reflect current information.*** Use the most current data that you have, not data from years ago.

- ***Read the Application and do what it says!*** Follow instructions carefully, utilize background information (like these tips) provided, answer the questions asked, and submit all required materials. This sounds simple, but it's a surprisingly common problem.

[1] *Special thanks to Karine Kanikkeberg and Kathy Hegarty, PEPNet '00 Review Team Leaders; much of this section is drawn from the tips they developed from their teams' experiences.*

Peer Review 5

- After a PEPNet Application is submitted, it undergoes initial screening to ensure that the application falls within format specifications. A volunteer panel then reviews each application to determine if it meets the PEPNet Criteria. Panel members are youth employment practitioners, researchers and policy makers who know and understand youth programming.

- Each review panel consists of three or four reviewers who have attended a PEPNet Reviewer Training Session. Each panel member first reviews the application individually. The panel members then meet to develop a consensus regarding the recommendation for the PEPNet Award or Promising Program status, and to prepare comments to be sent to the applicant. The comments address both the clarity and the content of responses and provide suggestions for improvement.

- Four outcomes are possible when results from the Application are announced in August. All applicants receive detailed feedback, regardless of the results. Options:
  - Initiative not recognized.
  - B - Promising Program Designation. Reviewers find the applicant meets PEPNet criteria in 3 of the 5 categories.
  - C - PEPNet Awardee Recognition. Reviewers find the application meets all 5 PEPNet categories. Awardees are invited to a national event in September in Washington, DC to receive recognition.
  - D - PEPNet Renewal Awardee Recognition. Awardees apply to renew their award every 4 years. Renewals answer the same questions as regular applicants, plus brief appendices to add to PEPNet's information base.

Benefits of Recognition 6

External Validation
- External validation from peers and international recognition of effectiveness. Awardees tell us this has been a major morale boost for staff, youth and the community.
- Acknowledgment as an exemplar of effective practice, part of PEPNet's prestigious effective practices network. Awardees use the PEPNet recognition extensively in their funding proposals.

Promotion, Publicity, Visibility
- Attend PEPNet Awards Ceremony in Washington, DC. (NYEC pays for one staff person and one young person from each Awarded initiative to attend.)
- Opportunities to promote the initiative through PEPNet's activities and network. For example, Awardees have testified before Congress, hosted study tours and forums for national policy makers and made presentations at professional conferences.
- Recognition in numerous national and local publications.

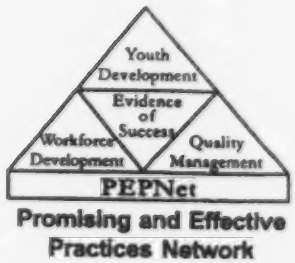
Improve the Field
- Contribute to the PEPNet Knowledge Base.
- Serve as models, trainers and examples in demonstrating "what works" and helping other initiatives improve their effectiveness.

The **PEPNet Application** is available on the PEPNet website at www.nyec.org/pepnet or by fax request at (202) 659-0399.

PEPNet Appendices

Sharing tips at the Career Development Program of Bay Cove Academy.

Refurbishing homes -- and inspiring young people -- at the YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School.



Promising and Effective Practices Network

Recommended Resources

National Youth Employment Coalition, Washington, DC. www.nyec.org (202) 659-1064.
- PEPNet Knowledge Base, see p. 2.
- New Leaders Academy Resources: www.nyec.org/New_Leaders_Resources.htm
- Institutional Racism Resources: www.nyec.org/voicesofdiversity

American Youth Policy Forum, Washington, DC. www.aypf.org (202) 775-9731.
- Publications Include: *Compendia of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices: Some Things (and More Things) That DO Make a Difference for Youth, Vol. I and II; Raising Minority Academic Achievement; A Guide for the Powerless; The Forgotten Half Revisited.*

Forum for Youth Investment, Takoma Park, MD. www.forumforyouthinvestment.org (301) 270-6250.
- *Powerful Pathways: Framing Options and Opportunities for Vulnerable Youth.* A Discussion Paper of the Youth Transition Funders Group. 2001.

Leonard Resource Group, Inc., Alexandria, VA. www.lrginc.org (703) 548-8535.
- *Sources of Funding for Youth Services.* In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, ETA, Office of Youth Services. 2001.

National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD. www.quality.nist.gov (301) 975-2036.
- *Baldrige National Quality Program, 2001 Education Criteria for Performance Excellence.* 2001.

Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA. www.ppv.org (215) 557-4400.
- *Youth Development: Issues, Challenges and Directions.* 2000.
- *Getting In, Staying On, Moving Up: A Practitioner's Approach to Employment Retention.*

Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy Studies, Baltimore, MD. www.levitan.org (410) 516-7169.
- *The 21st Century Challenge: Moving the Youth Agenda Forward.*
- *Confronting the Youth Demographic Challenge: The Labor Market Prospects of Out-of-School Young Adults.* 2000.

Wallace Reader's Digest Fund, New York, NY. www.wallacefunds.org (212) 251-9700.
- *New Rules, New Roles: Preparing All Young People for a Changing World. A Report on Career Exploration and Preparation for Young People.* 2000.

Youth Development and Research Fund, Gaithersburg, MD. www.teamyouth.com (301) 216-2050.
- *The Young Adult's Guide to "Making It."* 1997.

Specifically For WIA Youth Councils:

- *WIA Youth Policy Councils: Key to the Future for a Generation of Challenge.* Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy Studies, Baltimore, MD. www.levitan.org (410) 516-7169. 1999.
- *Youth Council Toolkit.* New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals, Albany, NY. www.nyatep.org (518) 465-1473. 1999.
- *Youth Council Guide to Creating a Youth Development System Under WIA.* John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, New Brunswick, NJ. www.heldrich.rutgers.edu (732) 932-4100. 2000.
- *The Intermediary Guidebook.* School-to-Work Intermediary Project, a joint venture of: Jobs for the Future and New Ways to Work. www.intermediarynetwork.org (617) 728-4446 or (415) 995-9860. 2000.

PEPNet Awardees 1997-2001

Visit www.nyec.org/pepnet/listprac for a 2-3 page case study of each PEPNet Awardee.

Academy for Career Excellence (ACE), New York, NY, *Jobs for Youth, Inc., New York*

Baltimore City Fire Cadet Program, Baltimore, MD, *Mayor's Office of Employment Development*

BladeRunners Program, Vancouver, British Columbia, *Community Development Unit, Province of British Columbia, Canada*

Career Academy, Baltimore, MD, *Mayor's Office of Employment Development*

Career Development Program, Brookline, MA, *Bay Cove Academy*

Career Exploration Project, New York, NY, *Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)*

Casa Verde Builders, Austin, TX, *American YouthWorks*

Cassadaga Job Corps Center, Cassadaga, NY, *Global Associates*

Central County Occupational Center/Program, San Jose, CA

CITE of Rochester/Monroe County, Rochester, NY, *Arbor, Inc.*

Civic Works, Baltimore, MD

Columbus Works, Inc., Columbus, OH

Communities and Schools for Career Success, Boston, MA, *Commonwealth Corporation*

Community Youth Corps, Norwalk, CA, *Workforce Investment Board of Southeast Los Angeles County*

Crispus Attucks YouthBuild, York, PA, *Crispus Attucks Community Development Corporation*

David L. Carrasco Job Corps Center, El Paso, TX, *Texas Educational Foundation, Inc.*

Delaware Valley Job Corps Center, Callicoon, NY, *Career Systems Development Corporation*

Diploma Plus, Boston, MA, *Commonwealth Corporation*

F.E.G.S. /Youth Opportunity Center, Bronx, N[illegible]

F.E.G.S. Education & Career Services, New York, NY

Fresh Start, Baltimore, MD, *Living Classrooms Foundation*

Genesee County Adolescent Vocational Exploration Program, Batavia, NY, *Genesee County Job Development Bureau*

Goodwill Toronto's Community Youth Program, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Gulf Coast Trades Center, New Waverly, TX

Job Link, Cleveland, OH, *Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP)*

Juma Ventures, San Francisco, CA

Lansing Area Manufacturing Partnership, Lansing, MI, *UAW, General Motors, and Ingham Intermediate School District*

Linking Learning to Life, Burlington, VT

Los Angeles Conservation Corps' Young Adult Services Division, Los Angeles, CA

Mayor's Youth Employment and Education Program, San Francisco, CA

Milwaukee Community Service Corps, Milwaukee, WI

MY TURN, Inc. (Massachusetts Youth Teenage Unemployment Reduction Network), Brockton, MA

Ohio Civilian Conservation Corps, eight locations across OH, *Ohio Department of Natural Resources*

Pittsburgh Job Corps Center, Pittsburgh, PA, *Res-Care, Inc.*

Project Future, Philadelphia, PA, *Metropolitan Career Center*

Project Opportunity, Alexandria, VA, *Bryant Adult/Alternative High School, Fairfax County Public Schools*

Re-Integration of Offenders - Youth (RIO-Y) Project, Austin, TX, *Texas Youth Commission*

San Jose Job Corps Center, San Jose, CA

Summer Works! Project-based Learning & Career Development, Bakersfield, CA, *Kern High School District - Career Resource Division*

Summer Works! School-based, Work-based & Service-learning, Bakersfield, CA, *Employers' Training Resource (JTPA) and Kern High School District-Career Resource Division*

Texaco STARS Program, Bakersfield, CA, *Texaco North American Production, Kern River Unit*

Work Appreciation for Youth (WAY), Dobbs Ferry, NY, The Children's Village, Inc.

The Work Group's Youth Corps Program, Pennsauken, NJ

YouthBuild Detroit, Detroit, MI, *Young Detroit Builders*

YouthBuild McLean County, Bloomington, IL

YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School (Philadelphia Youth For Change Charter School), Philadelphia, PA

Youthbuild Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ, *City of Phoenix Human Services Department*

YouthBuild Rockford, Rockford, IL, Comprehensive Community Solutions

Youth Connections of Southeast Minnesota, Rochester, MN, *Southeast Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc.*

Youth Leadership and Employment Program, New York, NY, *Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center*

Past PEPNet Awardees

Arizona CALL-A-TEEN, Phoenix, AZ

Bucks County "Treasures and the Law," Doylestown, PA, *Bucks County Office of Employment and Training*

Career Link Academy, Seattle, WA, *South Seattle Community College*

Denison Job Corps Center, Denison, IA, *Management & Training Corporation*

Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center, St. Paul, MN

Manufacturing Technology Partnership, Flint, MI, *UAW/General Motors Flint Metal Center*

McKesson Summer Youth Development Program, San Francisco, CA, *McKesson Corporation*

Moving Up Career Advancement Program, New York, NY, *Vocational Foundation, Inc.*

STRIVE/East Harlem Employment Service, New York, NY

URI/GAP JTPA Summer Employment Initiative, Providence, RI, *URI/Providence School Partnership Program*

Youth Internship Program, New York, NY, *Young Adult Learning Academy*

National Youth Employment Coalition

Contributing Members

as of 09/01

Abt Associates, Inc.
Academy for Educational Development
Alternative Learning Partnerships Division/ Illinois State Board of Education
Center for Employment Training
Corporation for Public Management
Covenant House New York
Goodwill Industries
Greater Long Beach Workforce Development Board
Gulf Coast Trades Center
Institute for Educational Leadership
New Ways to Work
Res Care
San Diego Workforce Partnership
South Bay Workforce Investment Board
Spirit of Detroit Youth Opportunity Movement
Strumpf Associates: Center for Strategic Change
TransCenter for Youth, Inc.
West Orange County Regional One Stop Center
Workplace, Inc., The

Regular Members

as of 09/01

Advocates for Children of New York
Alternative Schools Network
American YouthWorks
Applied Technology Systems
ARBOR, Inc.
Arizona Call-A-Teen Youth Resources
Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development, Youth Services Division
Bicycle Action Project, Inc.
Boston Workforce Development Coalition
Boys and Girls Clubs of America
Brandeis University
Broward Employment & Training Administration
Bryant Adult/Alternative High School
Buckeye Community Hope Foundation
Bucks County Office of Employment & Training
Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium
California Indian Manpower Consortium
California Workforce Association
Career Education Options Program/Shoreline Community College
Career Link Academy/South Seattle Community College
Center for Alternative Sentencing & Employment Services (CASES)
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Central County Occupational Center/Program
Children's Defense Fund
Citizens Advice Bureau/Girls Club
City of Oklahoma City Workforce Development Youth Services
City of Richmond YouthWORKS
City of Seattle
Columbus Works
Commonwealth Corporation
Communities In Schools of Philadelphia
Community Planning & Advocacy Council, The
Community Youth Corps
Comprehensive Community Solutions, Inc. (YouthBuild Rockford)
Connecticut Voices for Children
Contra Costa County Office of Youth Development Services
Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.
Council of Chief State School Officers
County of Kern
County of Riverside EDA-Job Training
Covenant House California
Covenant House International
Decision Information Resources, Inc.
Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, State of Oregon
Department of Economic Opportunity, City of Jersey
Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center
Economic Development and Community Resources, Salt Lake County
Empire State Organization of Youth Employment Services
Employers' Training Resource
Employment & Training Centers
Enterprise for High School Students
E.W. Communications
Family Institute / La Guardia CC
FEGS
Fresh Air Fund
Fund for the City of New York
General Board of Church & Society of the United Methodist Church
Girls Inc.
Good Shepherd Services
Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana, Inc.
Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh
Greater Omaha Workforce Development
Home Builders Institute
Houston Works
Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center
Jobs for the Future
John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
Josephine County Alcohol and Drug Program
Juma Ventures
Kern High School District
KRA Corporation

National Youth Employment Coalition

Regular Members
(continued)

Larkin Street Youth Center
LA Works
Living Classrooms Foundation
Los Angeles Conservation Corps
MCCOY, Inc.
Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation
Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities
Mayor's Office of Community Services (Philadelphia)
Metropolitan Career Center
MINACT
Minnesota Youth Programs
Mobile Consortium/Private Industry Council
MY TURN, Inc.
National Academy Foundation
National Alliance of Business
National Association of Community Action Agencies
National Association of Workforce Boards
National Association of Service and Conservation Corps
National Center on Secondary Education & Transition, University of Minnesota
National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership
National Center for Youth Law
National Center on Education and the Economy
National Child Labor Committee
National Council of La Raza
National League of Cities
National Mentoring Partnership
National Network for Youth
National Puerto Rican Forum
National Urban League
New York Association of Training & Employment Professionals
New York City Job and Career Center
New York Citywide School to Work Alliance
Northwest Workforce Development Council
Nueva Esperanza, Inc.
Oakland Private Industry Council
OICs of America
OIC West
Ohio Department of Natural Resources - Civilian Conservation Corps
Opportunities For A Better Tomorrow
Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board, Inc.
Pima County Workforce Development Board
Phoenix Youth Services
Prince George's County Private Industry Council
Project Empower - YO Louisville
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Public/Private Ventures
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Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
San Bernardino County JESD
San Diego Workforce Partnership
San Francisco Youth Employment Coalition
Santa Cruz County Career Works
Sar Levitan Center at John Hopkins University
School and Main, The Health Institute, Inc.
SE Works Neighborhood Jobs Center
Southeast Minnesota Private Industry Council
Southend Community Services, Inc.
Southern Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation
Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center
State of New Hampshire, Department of Education
State of Nevada, Employment, Training & Rehabilitation
STEP, Inc.
STRIVE - East Harlem Employment Service
Sunnyside Community Services
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West Central Job Partnership
West County Community Services
Westat
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
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Work Advantage-Tarrant County Workforce Development Board
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Workforce Strategy Center
Work Group, The
Work Opportunities Unlimited
Workforce Florida, Inc.
Worksystems, Inc.
YMCA of the USA
YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee
Young Adult Learning Academy
Youth and Family Services
Youthbuild Phoenix, City of Phoenix
YouthBuild USA
Youth Development and Research Fund
Youth Guidance
Youth Resource Development Corporation

Acknowledgements

The National Youth Employment Coalition would like to thank the following for their support of PEPNet:

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PEPNet's Funders: the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Pinkerton Foundation

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All of those who are using PEPNet's resources,
in a quest for more effective and successful youth programming

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